

The Dark Flame, by Trevor Baxendale

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[Part One]

(Cries of pain.)

DOCTOR: Come on, old thing, don't let me down today.

ACE: What's the hurry, Doctor?

DOCTOR: We're due to collect Bernice, remember? I don't want to arrive too late. Or too early. One tiny mistake in the coordinates and Benny could be a wizened old crone by the time we materialise on Orbos.

ACE: This is a time machine. How can we be late?

DOCTOR: The Tardis is skittish, almost agitated.

(Beeping.)

ACE: Is that the telepathic circuits?

DOCTOR: Yes, Ace. Someone's trying to make contact.

REMnex [OC]: Doctor.

DOCTOR: Remnex? Is that you?

ACE: Who's Remnex?

DOCTOR: Oh, he's an old friend, a human scientist stationed on Orbos.

ACE: Which is where Benny is.

DOCTOR: I know. Something must be up. Trust Bernice to stir up trouble wherever she goes.

ACE: Oh, turn it down, can't you?

DOCTOR: It's the telepathic circuits, they're overloading.

REMnex [OC]: Doctor, the dark flames.

ACE: Switch it off!

DOCTOR: I can't. I. Look out, Ace!

(Sound of flames.)

ACE: Oh, it's filling my mind! It feels like my head's going to explode.

DOCTOR: Don't resist it. It'll destroy your mind if you fight it.

(Door opens.)

Slyde: Ah, there you are, Remnex. I've been looking everywhere for you.

(Door closes.)

REMnex: Good evening, Slyde. Sorry to be such a nuisance, but this is the only place I know where I can be guaranteed some peace and quiet. I sometimes come here to look out over Marran Alpha.

Slyde: You should be working on the solar generator, Remnex. Those wave equations still require attention.

REMnex: I know, I know. But sometimes I simply have to rest. I'm an old man, Slyde. I know you're trained to show little interest in anything other than arithmetic, but I like to come here occasionally for a quiet moment or two, gaze out at the view.

Slyde: View?

REMnex: Distant stars, gaseous nebulae. We're so far from anything here.

Slyde: We are in geostationary orbit around the planet Marran Alpha.

REMnex: Oh, terrible place, its surface a volcanic chaos, its atmosphere a cauldron of poisons.

Slyde: It is just a mass of rock, minerals and gas. The raw ingredients of a planet.

REMnex: Hmm. Perhaps I am so old I have grown out of looking at everything in purely scientific terms.

Slyde: Your mistake.

REMnex: You may think differently when you reach my age, Slyde.

Slyde: I doubt it.

REMnex: Hmm. Talking of thinking differently, I believe the Doctor is due to arrive shortly. Perhaps I shall get ready to meet him. It's been such a long time.

Slyde: You know this Doctor person?

(Door opens.)

REMnex: Well, I thought everybody knew the Doctor.

(Door closes. Walking.)

Slyde: I've heard some of the legends, of course.

REMnex: I'm sure he'll have some fascinating observations to make concerning our work here.

Slyde: Really?

REMnex: Oh yes. I believe Professor Lomar is very keen to seek the Doctor's opinion. He's an expert in temporal engineering, you know.

Slyde: I thought he was just coming to collect Professor Summerfield.

REMnex: That's true. But the Doctor can't resist the change to have a nose around. He's famous for it. He has the curiosity of a cat.

SLYDE: How interesting.

(Beeping.)

ACE: Ah, oh, what was that? That noise. Someone dying?

DOCTOR: I've no idea. Yet.

ACE: We're still on course, then.

DOCTOR: Yes. We'll be materialising on the Orbos facility very soon. I only hope Benny's all right.

ACE: And what about your mate Remnex?

DOCTOR: We'll have to see when we arrive. The Orbos facility is a scientific research base orbiting the planet Marran Alpha. Remnex is part of a trio of scientists experimenting with Black Light reactions.

ACE: Black Light? What, you mean ultraviolet?

DOCTOR: No, Ace, no, no, no. This Black Light is an energy field generated by quantum meta-fluctuations in the Space-Time continuum.

ACE: Ah, I see.

DOCTOR: Scientists have been trying to tap into its power for centuries, but it is very dangerous.

ACE: And you think something's happened to Remnex.

DOCTOR: Or something is going to happen.

(Lots of effort and straining. Gasping.)

BENNY: Oh. Now this is not what I had in mind when I came here, Lomar.

LOMAR: I couldn't have done it without you, Bernice.

BENNY: I wouldn't have minded if you'd tried, honestly. Phew. I mean, do I look like an Ogron?

LOMAR: I don't know. I've never seen an Ogron.

BENNY: I'm better looking than an Ogron, but you'll just have to take my word for it.

LOMAR: I will. Anyway, that's all the old photon realignment equipment moved. I should think we're just about ready to start.

BENNY: Aren't you going to wait for the Doctor?

LOMAR: Of course. He should be here very soon.

BENNY: Oh, grief, is that the time? I'd better get ready to meet him. He'll probably be early. Or late. The Doctor hates to be on time.

LOMAR: I'm sorry you'll be leaving us so soon, Bernice.

BENNY: I'm just sorry I never got to see Victor.

LOMAR: I'm afraid you had a wasted journey.

BENNY: Oh, it's not so much that, Lomar. It's been interesting, and sweaty, but well, I'm just a teeny bit worried, actually.

LOMAR: Well, I'm sure there's no need to be concerned. Perhaps Mister Farrison was unavoidably detained, or maybe he just forgot that he'd agreed to meet you here.

BENNY: I'm not sure. That's not like the Victor Farrison I know. He was quite specific in his message. He said he was coming here to Orbos and he wanted to see me. I can't help thinking something's happened to him.

(Chipping at rock.)

VICTOR: Here it comes. Now get ready to pull, Joseph, but gently.

JOSEPH: I know, I know. I am fully programmed to assist you, Victor.

(Think 3CPO from the original Star Wars.)

VICTOR: Yes, I am aware of that, Joseph. It was me who programmed you, remember?

JOSEPH: How could I forget, stuck with a voice like this?

VICTOR: And a million microcell omnitrionic memory bank. Let's not forget that.

JOSEPH: You're such a flatterer, Vic.

VICTOR: Quit talking and start pulling. But

BOTH: Gently.

JOSEPH: Got it.

VICTOR: Great.

JOSEPH: What is it? Looks like a lump of rock to me.

VICTOR: It's one of the galaxy's most ancient artefacts. It's just a bit black with age. There. Oh. It's er, oh, I don't know. It feels almost alive or something.

JOSEPH: Alive? Don't be daft. It's stone dead.

VICTOR: It feels funny, I tell you.

JOSEPH: What's it supposed to be?

VICTOR: Did I really programme you for stupidity? I must have been mad.

JOSEPH: You must have been drunk, judging by the way my synaptic circuits are ordered.

VICTOR: Here, hold this.

JOSEPH: Oh, it's a skull.

VICTOR: What did you expect? We've been practically knee-deep in human remains for nearly two weeks now.

JOSEPH: Gives me the flaming willies, this lot, I don't mind telling you. All those fanatics. They say they were buried alive, you know.

VICTOR: I know. The Death Pit of Marran Alpha. (sigh) Well, come on. We'd better show our mysterious employer what we've found.

(Door opens.)

SLYDE: Good evening, Professor Lomar.

LOMAR: Come in, Slyde. And Remnex. All set for the great experiment?

(Door closes.)

REMnex: I think so, Lomar. Professor Summerfield, how lovely to see you again.

BENNY: Hi there. Any sign of the Doctor yet?

REMnex: We've come to meet him. He's due any minute.

BENNY: Don't let that fool you. This is the Doctor we're talking about. As far as he's concerned, the laws of Time are just there for the breaking.

SLYDE: I understand that he does have a rather cavalier attitude, for a Time Lord.

LOMAR: We shouldn't dismiss the advice of a Time Lord, Slyde. This is our chance to consult a real expert.

SLYDE: I need hardly remind you, Professor Lomar, that we are all experts here.

(The Tardis materialises.)

BENNY: Oh, hang on, here he comes.

LOMAR: Remarkable!

SLYDE: Ludicrous.

(The Tardis door opens.)

DOCTOR: Right on time. Good morning.

BENNY: Evening.

DOCTOR: Er, good evening.

ACE: Hi folks.

(Tardis door closes.)

LOMAR: Welcome to Orbos, Doctor. I am Professor Lomar.

DOCTOR: How very nice to meet you at last, Professor. I hear a lot about you.

LOMAR: Oh, thank you. These are my colleagues, Professor Slyde and

DOCTOR: Remnex!

REMnex: How are you, Doctor? It's good to see you again.

DOCTOR: I'm very well. You're looking in surprisingly good health yourself, Remnex.

REMnex: Surprisingly?

DOCTOR: We'll have to have a little chat about that.

ACE: What's going on? Doctor, wasn't this your friend who you heard scream in the Tardis?

REMnex: I beg your pardon?

DOCTOR: Shh. Not now, Ace. Why don't you and Benny just go off and amuse yourselves somewhere. Go on.

BENNY: Oh, charmed, I'm sure. Come on, Ace. The grown ups want to talk.

ACE: Anything worth amusing ourselves with around here?

(Door opens.)

BENNY: Not really, no.

ACE: Oh.

BENNY: But let's go and see if there's anything I've missed.

(Door closes.)

JOSEPH: For all my million microcell omnitrionic stupidity, Vic, I can't for the life of me see what we are doing here. I mean, are we prisoners or what?

VICTOR: Oh, I prefer to think of ourselves as temporary but compulsory guests.

JOSEPH: I can live with that.

VICTOR: Give me the relic, Joseph.

JOSEPH: Please. Give me the relic, Joseph, please.

VICTOR: Oh, just hand it over.

JOSEPH: Don't snatch.

VICTOR: Stop fooling. This is serious. If we're to get out of here at all, well, alive that is, then we need to be sure this thing is okay.

JOSEPH: Alive is such a subjective term.

VICTOR: Well, think deactivated, then. Now, let's have a look at this thing.

JOSEPH: It's thousands of years old. It's bound to show a bit of wear and tear.
VICTOR: It's archaic, of course, but more importantly it is a relic. It has a certain significance. The question is, for whom?
JOSEPH: Enter our mysterious employer.
VICTOR: Shh. Here he comes.
BROKE: You have it.
VICTOR: Yes, we found it.
JOSEPH: Took a bit of digging, I can tell you.
BROKE: It doesn't matter how hard it was to find, so long as it is safe and intact. Give it to me, please.
VICTOR: Er, hold on a sec. Can we talk about this?
BROKE: There's nothing to discuss, sir. Hand me the relic.
VICTOR: Not so fast. We don't even know who you are.
BROKE: That is not important to you. Now, sir, if you wouldn't mind, give me the relic.
VICTOR: Look, we've got something you want. All we're interested in is a few answers, that's all. You drag us down into these ancient tombs, force us to dig up some old skull and then demand to have it handed over. We'd like an explanation. We'd like you to ow!
JOSEPH: Hey, what do you think you're
BROKE: Be silent, robot.
JOSEPH: If you have hurt Victor
BROKE: Be silent or I will deactivate you.
JOSEPH: I would like to see you try it, buster.
BROKE: Oh, do be quiet. Ah, at last I have the holy relic. It is a thing of beauty.
JOSEPH: What? That old lump of gristle?
BROKE: The head of Vilus Krull!

REMnex: It really is marvellous to see you again, Doctor. You're looking so well.
DOCTOR: Thank you, Remnex.
REMnex: How is Mel?
DOCTOR: Ah, Mel. Fine, I should think. Yes. She went off to explore the universe with an itinerant con artist.
REMnex: No change there, then.
DOCTOR: Ah yes, things were different then, Remnex. The cosmos seemed a more innocent place, somewhere you could show a friend without caution or embarrassment.
REMnex: Whereas now?
DOCTOR: I don't know. I seem to spend most of my time trying to outwit disaster before it even happens.
REMnex: Is there something on your mind, old friend? Is there another disaster looming?
DOCTOR: Oh yes, I'm afraid so.
REMnex: It won't help staring at Marran Alpha, Doctor.
DOCTOR: Interesting looking planet. Quite a view from this balcony, too.
REMnex: Mmm. I come here sometimes to think. But I try not to stare at Marron Alpha for too long.
DOCTOR: It looks like a stormy place. Dark clouds, lightning. A planet in a very bad mood.
REMnex: It rains acid too, they tell me.
DOCTOR: Remnex, have you access to any tele-temporal projection equipment?
REMnex: Er, no, Doctor. My field of expertise is in solar mechanics. Nice and straight-forward. No time travel theory at all. Why do you ask?
DOCTOR: On the way here, the Tardis picked up some sort of telepathic communication in the Space-Time Vortex. It's most unusual.
REMnex: And it had some connection with Orbos?
DOCTOR: It's hard for me to say.
REMnex: Hmm. Perhaps you'd better ask Lomar. She'll know for sure.

(Walking.)

BENNY: So, been anywhere nice?
ACE: In the Tardis?
BENNY: Ah. Point taken. Deserted spacestations, planetary invasions, general alien skulduggery, that kind of thing?
ACE: Mmm hmm, you said it. You?
BENNY: Oh, I came here to meet an archaeology chum. He didn't show up. I was supposed to be helping him with his latest project.
ACE: Oh. Where'd he get to then?
BENNY: That's the odd thing. He never even arrived on Orbos, apparently.
ACE: So, what have you been doing?
BENNY: Do you really want to know?

(Door opens.)

LOMAR: Remnex, Doctor, come in, come in. Been catching up on the past?

DOCTOR: And the future.

(Door closes.)

REMNX: The Doctor was asking me about our capability for trans-temporal telecommunications here on Orbos.

LOMAR: Not much call for that here, Doctor. But we do have something that might interest you. Our current research programme is about to reach its conclusion, is it not, Slyde?

SLYDE: I'm sure the Doctor won't be interested.

DOCTOR: Why not? What is it?

LOMAR: Our latest experiment. A controlled Black Light explosion.

REMNX: The first the cosmos has ever known.

DOCTOR: A Black Light explosion? Professor Lomar, this is appallingly dangerous.

SLYDE: Don't fret, Doctor. Every precaution has been taken. The explosion will be fully controlled.

DOCTOR: Controlled? How?

LOMAR: We have a Black Light converter.

DOCTOR: Can I see it?

LOMAR: Certainly. In fact, I was rather hoping you'd observe the experiment in its entirety.

DOCTOR: Well, I shouldn't really, Lomar. I mean, the Time Lords frown on that sort of thing.

SLYDE: I thought you were a renegade.

DOCTOR: I prefer to think of myself as an independent.

LOMAR: But Doctor, a man with your breadth of knowledge and great expertise, well, your advice would be invaluable.

DOCTOR: A controlled Black Light explosion? Well, I suppose I do have some experience in the area.

JOSEPH: Victor, Victor, can you hear me? Come on, wakey, wakey.

BROKE: You are wasting your time.

JOSEPH: He is just unconscious, that is all.

BROKE: Pity. I had hoped to have killed him.

JOSEPH: You are a right nasty piece of work. Victor, come on. You can't leave all of this to your glamorous assistant.

BROKE: Oh, how amusing. I didn't know it was possible for a mere robot to demonstrate such affection.

JOSEPH: Who are you calling mere? You would be surprised what I can demonstrate.

BROKE: I doubt it. You're just a tricked-up computer, a downloaded personality, a carbon copy of your programmer, a sanitised duplicate. It's pathetic, really.

JOSEPH: What are we doing here? What is this all about?

BROKE: Well, I'm a sort of retainer.

JOSEPH: For what, or whom, exactly?

BROKE: Have you ever heard of the Dark Flame?

DOCTOR: A reverse photon manipulator? How quaint.

LOMAR: You wound us, Doctor. We're very proud of this laboratory.

DOCTOR: Oh, I didn't mean to offend, Lomar. No, it's very impressive, for beginners.

SLYDE: You're so kind.

DOCTOR: I never could see the fascination for Black Light as a source of energy. It's too unstable for practical purposes.

SLYDE: There are dangers, of course, but we have eliminated every variable.

DOCTOR: Well, now I am impressed. What do you use as a Black Light convertor?

LOMAR: Positioned here, right at the heart of the convertor, is the control element, an isochronite crystal.

DOCTOR: Isochronite? Oh, a force-generated tachyon super-conductor should do the trick. Can I touch it?

SLYDE: No.

LOMAR: I don't see why not.

SLYDE: There is no need for him to touch it. It's incredibly time-sensitive.

DOCTOR: Exactly. I'd like to check the crystal for any temporal imbalance, if I may.

SLYDE: It is perfectly balanced.

LOMAR: Doctor, please, we'd be honoured if you'd confirm Slyde's assertion. Just for the record.

DOCTOR: Thank you, Professor Lomar. Ah yes. Now, let me see.

SLYDE: What can you feel?

DOCTOR: I can feel Time playing over the crystal, through it and around it, like wine running through sand. I can feel it on the tips of my fingers, like the slightest breeze on the edge of the hurricane, or the soft beat of the butterfly's wings. The crystal exists outside the normal time-stream. I can feel what happens tomorrow, and what may still happen yesterday, and will happen today.

LOMAR: Are you sure you're all right, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Not really. The isochronite is unstable, Lomar. It is remarkably time-sensitive for a synthetic material, but it seems future-heavy.

SLYDE: It is meant only as a temporary measure, Doctor, until we find the perfect control element.

DOCTOR: For this kind of job, the control element would have to exist partially outside of this Time-Space Continuum. Very difficult to find.

SLYDE: Unless you know where to look.

DOCTOR: Quite.

LOMAR: I do appreciate the time you've taken to help us, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I'm not helping you, Lomar. I just want to make sure you're all standing well back when you light the blue touch-paper.

LOMAR: Strictly speaking, that's Remnex's department. He's working on the initial phase of the Black Light explosion, the creation of a miniature artificial star.

DOCTOR: Which will provide the energy and material for the blast. I think I'd better have a word with old Remnex.

BENNY: (effort) Oh, here, oof.

ACE: I can't believe this is what you've been doing with your time.

BENNY: Oh, I didn't get where I am today without knowing a few things about waste disposal.

ACE: ♪ My old man's a dustman ♪

BENNY: Watch it, you.

ACE: I still can't believe it. Worse than that, I can't believe I'm actually helping you. I mean, rubbish collection?

BENNY: I prefer to think of it as refuse processing.

(Whirr, whoosh.)

BENNY: Actually, it's rather therapeutic.

ACE: If you say so. If you ask me, this set-up looks a bit dodgy. There's no field dampener on the transmat grid. There'll be all kinds of energy leakage. And we're standing right in its way.

(Another whirr.)

BENNY: Then the sooner we're finished, the better.

ACE: Where does all this stuff go, anyway?

BENNY: The planet Marran Alpha. Lovely place. The surface is a molten volcanic soup with a toxic atmosphere and constant acid rain.

ACE: Hmm, I can see why they want to send their rubbish down there.

BENNY: One-way teleport. This stuff won't last long when it arrives. Argh!

ACE: Hey, what's wrong?

BENNY: Oh. Oh, I don't know. It's, just felt sort of, well, I was a bit wobbly, to be honest.

ACE: It's this place. God knows what kind of crap that transmat's throwing out.

BENNY: It's supposed to be throwing the crap out.

ACE: You know what I mean. It could have a bad energy leak or something. Here, sit down.

BENNY: I'll be all right in a moment. Argh!

ACE: What?

BENNY: Oh, Goddess, that hurts!

ACE: What?

BENNY: Oh, it's my head, it's. Good grief, it's, it's a migraine. I, no, wait, no, it isn't. It's, it's

ACE: What? Benny, what's the matter?

BENNY: I'm, something in my head, hot, burning, black as night. Ow!

ACE: Hey, that's what we saw in the Tardis.

BENNY: What?

ACE: The Doctor and me. We had a vision or an hallucination or something. Black flames, and we heard a.

(A cry in the distance.)

ACE: Benny, wait here.

(The Doctor hears the cry too.)

DOCTOR: Remnex!

(Runs.)

(Rattles door knob.)

DOCTOR: Remnex. Remnex!

LOMAR: What's going on? What was that awful scream?

DOCTOR: Remnex. I can't get this door open.

LOMAR: Here, let me try.

DOCTOR: I think it's locked.

LOMAR: Remnex? (knocks) Are you in there? We heard a, a shout.

ACE: What gives?
DOCTOR: Ace, the door.
ACE: Right-o. Stand back.
(Door shatters.)
ACE: We're in.
LOMAR: By the stars. Remnex! Remnex, what's wrong?
DOCTOR: He's dead.
LOMAR: What? How, how do you know? Remnex, can you hear me, old friend?
ACE: You're wasting your time, mate. Look at all that blood.
LOMAR: Oh my. He's been stabbed.
ACE: Right through the eye, and straight into the brain. Nasty.
DOCTOR: But effective.
ACE: What's that he's holding?
DOCTOR: Hmm, let's see. He's got quite a grip on it. How very intriguing.
LOMAR: It's the isochronite crystal, from the Black Light convertor.
DOCTOR: That would explain a lot.
LOMAR: It would? Frankly, Doctor, I don't understand any of this. Who'd want to kill Remnex, a harmless old man?
SLYDE: What's going on? Great stars!
LOMAR: Remnex has been murdered, Slyde.
BENNY: Sorry I'm late.
DOCTOR: What kept you?
BENNY: Oh, nothing much. Bad headache, blindingly painful hallucinations, some sort of precognitive vision. You know the sort of thing.
DOCTOR: I see.
BENNY: Goddess! Remnex has been stabbed!
LOMAR: He was holding this.
SLYDE: The isochronite. What was he doing with that?
DOCTOR: Sending a message through Time and Space.
SLYDE: Don't be ridiculous.
LOMAR: What message?
DOCTOR: A cry for help. His scream transmitted backwards through Time by way of the isochronite he was clutching as he died.
ACE: We heard it in the Tardis.
LOMAR: What, really?
ACE: Yeah, on our way here. Only we saw something too, in our heads. Black fire. Remember, Doctor?
DOCTOR: Hmm.
BENNY: That's what I saw just now.
ACE: That's what I was trying to tell you.
BENNY: Are you telling me that you knew Remnex would be killed? You had some kind of premonition and didn't do anything about it?
DOCTOR: It's not as simple as that, Bernice. The Tardis was travelling backwards through Time
BENNY: If this is some kind of rot about protecting the Web of Time
DOCTOR: The Web of Time can look after itself. It's the spider I want.
BENNY: But you still knew this was going to happen, right? You had a vision in the Tardis?
DOCTOR: I'm afraid so, yes. Although I think we could say that this was more accurately a warning of some kind.
BENNY: Well, maybe you could have warned *him*.
LOMAR: I can't believe this. It's preposterous.
SLYDE: I still don't see how Remnex could have had the isochronite in his possession at all.
BENNY: Hang on a minute. Call me old-fashioned, but shouldn't we be more concerned with who stabbed poor old Remnex to death?
SLYDE: I should have thought that was obvious.
BENNY: Er, sorry, no, it isn't. Not to me, anyway.
SLYDE: The Doctor did it.
ACE: Come again?
SLYDE: The Doctor had both the motive and the opportunity. He wanted to prevent the Black Light experiment going ahead. This is nothing short of deliberate sabotage.
BENNY: This isn't sabotage, it's murder.
SLYDE: A mere technicality.
LOMAR: Slyde, Remnex was an old friend of the Doctor. Why would he want to murder him?
DOCTOR: Good point.
ACE: And don't forget the warning Remnex sent us through Time. The vision.

BENNY: You mean the black fire? I've had a thought about that. There was a kind of cult that used to exist a while back. It was called the Cult of the Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: Yes! They used to worship an energy being from another universe, I seem to recall.

BENNY: Bit of a coincidence, don't you think?

ACE: That's it, then. Remnex was trying to tell us that a member of this Dark Flame cult murdered him.

SLYDE: Preposterous.

DOCTOR: We mustn't jump to any conclusions.

SLYDE: This conjecture is a meaningless distraction. You may not have actually wielded the knife that slew Remnex, Doctor, but your accomplice Ace is fully armed and clearly capable of taking a life.

ACE: Starting with yours if you carry on like that.

DOCTOR: Ace!

BENNY: Ace was with me in the waste disposal room when we heard Remnex scream. She couldn't have done it.

SLYDE: With respect, Professor Summerfield, you would say that.

BENNY: Right, I've had just about enough of you, Slyde. Come on, Ace, I need some air.

LOMAR: Slyde, go with them.

SLYDE: But

LOMAR: Remnex has been murdered, for goodness' sake. Stop making ludicrous accusations and start investigating.

SLYDE: Professor Lomar. (leaves)

LOMAR: Well, Doctor? You're the only one to stay quiet during all of this.

DOCTOR: That's because I'm the only one who's thinking. And right now I'm thinking about an old cult that used to worship an energy being from another universe.

LOMAR: I thought the Cult of the Dark Flame was extinct.

DOCTOR: Why don't we ask your Professor Slyde about that?

BENNY: I can't stand that Slyde.

ACE: What a complete

BENNY: He's unpleasant and insecure, Ace, but he's also frightened.

SLYDE: On the contrary, Professor Summerfield, I have nothing to fear.

ACE: Get lost, creep. This is a private conversation.

SLYDE: And how fitting that it should take place in the waste disposal room.

LOMAR: Doctor, must we hurry so?

DOCTOR: I always end up in a hurry. Ace! Benny! Ace.

LOMAR: Where's Slyde, and Bernice?

DOCTOR: Ace, wake up.

ACE: (weak) Doctor, the transmat. Benny, Benny.

DOCTOR: What is it? Where's Benny?

ACE: Slyde hit me, caught me off-guard. He pushed Benny into the transmat.

DOCTOR: What!

LOMAR: It's too late, Doctor. The waste teleport is one-way only. An open-ended transmat to the planet below us. The surface is ravaged by violent acid storms. If Bernice has been sent down there, then she's already dead.

[Part Two]

DOCTOR: That had better not be true, Lomar.

LOMAR: I'm double-checking the transmat log, Doctor. I'm afraid there can be no mistake, Bernice has gone.

DOCTOR: Ace! Wake up! She's losing consciousness again. She's been hit with some kind of stun beam.

LOMAR: We can take her to the infirmary. I can't think what's happened.

DOCTOR: Your Professor Slyde has a lot to answer for, Lomar.

LOMAR: I don't know where he could have got to.

BENNY: Ew, gagh, good grief, what kind of transmat do you call that? Oh Goddess, I feel, I feel like. Oh, I don't know what I feel like, but it isn't good. Oh, here comes dinner.

SLYDE: Stand up and stop complaining, Professor Summerfield.

BENNY: Oh, Slyde, what the hell do you think you're playing at? That was a waste disposal transmat. We could have ended up in deep space or on the sun or had our molecules smeared across the surface of Marran Alpha like, oh good grief. I feel awful. Let me sit down on this rock.

SLYDE: Stay standing, or next time I put the neuro-stunner to a more lethal setting.

BENNY: Neuro-stunner? Oh, how gauche. Besides, bearing in mind that I'm still alive, I presume you need me for something, so you can't really threaten me. Well, not too much, anyway. So if you don't mind, I've got

to sit down. Oh. Ah. Anyway, where are we, exactly? Not the most attractive spot, I have to say, but I don't suppose you receive many complaints from the rubbish normally sent down here.

SLYDE: We are beneath the surface of the planet Marran Alpha.

BENNY: Ah, something I can consider myself lucky for at last. Considering that the surface of Marran Alpha is a continuous storm of acid rain and toxic gases, I'm very glad to be beneath it. I would, however, like to know why.

SLYDE: There's someone down here I'd like you to meet.

BENNY: I'm flattered, of course, but we haven't been seeing each other long enough for me to meet your mother. Ah, oh, let me guess. We're here for an audience with the King of the Rubbish People.

DOCTOR: Ace, can you hear me?

(Ace moans.)

LOMAR: She's in a bad way, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Her neurological system has been completely scrambled, Lomar. I only hope the damage isn't permanent.

LOMAR: She was still conscious when we found her.

DOCTOR: Just about.

LOMAR: But it's a good sign. She must be made of pretty stern stuff.

DOCTOR: Oh, she is. But she's also wearing a lightweight combat suit. The material is designed to defuse phased energy beams.

LOMAR: Combat suit?

DOCTOR: Oh, it's a long story. I mean, Ace is not the girl she was when I first met her. We parted company for a while and she fell in with the military. She's very good at killing Daleks, though, so it wasn't a complete waste, I suppose.

LOMAR: I'm sure she'll be all right, Doctor. According to the medical computer her lifesigns are very strong.

ACE: (weak) Benny.

DOCTOR: Ace? It's the Doctor. Can you remember exactly what happened?

LOMAR: Go easy, Doctor.

DOCTOR: She's made of pretty stern stuff, remember?

ACE: (weak) Hit me with a neuro-stunner. Wasn't ready for it. Benny gone. The Dark Flame. The Dark Flame.

LOMAR: She's delirious.

DOCTOR: She's a fighter, remember. Her brain's just trying to make sense of things. Ace, relax. You've had a bang on the head. Just rest.

ACE: I know where. Benny. Doctor, flames.

DOCTOR: Ace, listen to my voice. Relax. Sleep. Sleep.

LOMAR: What now?

DOCTOR: What indeed. But not necessarily now.

BENNY: Ah, a dungeon. How lovely.

SLYDE: Get inside.

BENNY: I knew you'd say that. What if I refuse?

SLYDE: Broke here will break your arm.

BENNY: Straight to the point and very clear. I like that. Pleased to meet you, Broke.

BROKE: The sentiment is not reciprocated, ma'am. Now would you please get inside?

BENNY: Oh, hey, hang on, Broke.

(Door clangs shut. Obligatory dripping water.)

BENNY: Oi, don't go. I haven't tipped you yet. Wait a minute, you've forgotten to leave the light on for me.

Oh, you just can't get the staff these days. Huh. Glad I didn't tip them now. Hello? Is there anybody there?

Oh, hang on, think I've got a penlight here. (click) Grief! Where the hell did you spring from?

JOSEPH: Goodness. It is Benny Summerfield, isn't it?

SLYDE: We have the relic, Broke?

BROKE: Indeed, Mister Slyde, sir.

SLYDE: Farrison served us well?

BROKE: He carried out his orders. It was occasionally necessary to discipline him.

SLYDE: Really? I'm sorry I missed that.

BROKE: I'm sure you are, sir.

SLYDE: In the end Summerfield wasn't required, then. Pity. She could do with a little discipline herself.

BROKE: Is everything else proceeding according to plan?

SLYDE: More or less. There are one or two loose ends that need tying up on Orbos. A disgraced Time Lord and his hooligan of a companion. But they shouldn't present any problems. The important thing is that we can carry on with the resurrection immediately.

BROKE: You have obtained a suitable host.

SLYDE: Oh yes. I'll go and fetch him now. I think you will be quite amused. Prepare the transmat.

JOSEPH: It is Bernice Summerfield, isn't it? The famous professor of alien archaeology?

BENNY: Er, yes. Do I know you?

JOSEPH: Well, yes and no, Professor. My name is Joseph. Pleased to meet you.

BENNY: You know, your voice, it's er, it's very familiar.

JOSEPH: That would be my master's voice, then, so to speak.

BENNY: Who is your master?

JOSEPH: Victor Farrison.

BENNY: Oh, good grief, Victor Farrison. You do sound a bit like him.

JOSEPH: Well, I'm very much afraid so, Professor Summerfield, but I cannot take all the blame. I have been programmed that way.

BENNY: By Victor?

JOSEPH: Spot on, Professor. I have the dubious pleasure of being his humble assistant.

BENNY: So where is he?

JOSEPH: You are standing on him.

(Victor groans.)

BENNY: Oh!

(Whoosh.)

BROKE: Welcome back, Mister Slyde.

SLYDE: Here.

BROKE: This is going to be the host?

SLYDE: That's right. Is there a problem?

BROKE: He doesn't look at all well, sir.

SLYDE: That's because he's dead.

BROKE: Well, that's all right, then.

SLYDE: I'm so glad you approve. We'll need the body in the crypt. You can carry him, Broke.

BROKE: An honour, sir.

SLYDE: The honour will be all his. Come on. I want Summerfield to witness this.

BENNY: Victor. What's the matter with him?

JOSEPH: Lazy professor. Always has been.

BENNY: Victor. Victor (slaps) wake up.

JOSEPH: That and being hit by Broke.

BENNY: Ah. The butler did it?

JOSEPH: That's right. We were working for him and Professor Slyde.

BENNY: Working?

VICTOR: Oh, he er, he means the dig.

BENNY: Victor, thank Goddess.

VICTOR: Oh, hello, Bernice.

BENNY: I thought you might be brain-damaged or something. What happened to you? I've been waiting on Orbos for two weeks for you to turn up. Now I find you've been lying in a bloody dungeon all this time without even bothering to tell me.

JOSEPH: I don't know. Some people.

VICTOR: Well, I must have arrived on Orbos just before you, met Professor Slyde and next thing, well, wham bam start digging, chum.

BENNY: Digging? For what?

VICTOR: Some sort of relic.

JOSEPH: A skull.

(Door opens.)

BROKE: On your feet.

BENNY: We are on our feet. There isn't room to sit down in here, let alone swing a cat.

BROKE: Whatever.

SLYDE: Just come out, all of you. There's something you should see.

BENNY: Ooo, let me guess. The torture chamber?

SLYDE: How droll.

BENNY: Well, some of us have standards to maintain.

VICTOR: Don't antagonise them, Bernice. The butler's a right nutter.

BENNY: The other one is a professor. You never know what people get up to in their spare time, do you?

LOMAR: Where are we going? Is it safe to leave Ace alone?

DOCTOR: She's under the supervision of your medical computer, Lomar. And while Ace has a little nap, I want to have a quick look around.

LOMAR: This is Remnex's room.

DOCTOR: Yes.

(Door squeaks.)

DOCTOR: Now isn't that interesting?

LOMAR: What?

DOCTOR: No Remnex.

LOMAR: The body's gone! Who

DOCTOR: A number of possibilities present themselves, Lomar. Firstly, Remnex's body has simply vanished into thin air. Not impossible, but not very possible either in the circumstances. Secondly, whoever murdered Remnex has already moved his body.

LOMAR: And thirdly?

DOCTOR: Remnex has risen from the dead.

LOMAR: That's not very funny, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I know.

BENNY: Oh, this is lovely, Slyde. I really like what you've done to the place. Lots of dank cold rock with lichen for colour, and of course a whopping great altar.

SLYDE: I'm so tired of your feeble witticisms, Summerfield. Can't you think of anything serious to say?

BENNY: How about, let us go, you git. There, see? I think I'll stick to the feeble witticisms.

SLYDE: Put her over there with the other two, Broke.

BROKE: Yes, sir. Well, go on, move!

VICTOR: What's this all about?

BENNY: I was hoping you'd tell me, Victor. You've fallen in with a pretty rum lot if you ask me.

JOSEPH: That is not the half of it, Professor Summerfield.

BENNY: Oh please, call me Benny. Everyone does.

BROKE: Silence, dog.

BENNY: Well, almost everyone.

JOSEPH: Benny it is, then, Professor Summerfield.

VICTOR: Er, wait a sec. Something's happening.

JOSEPH: What's that they've got?

BENNY: It looks like a body.

VICTOR: A dead body. Some old guy by the looks of it. Why are they putting him on the altar?

BENNY: Oh bugger. It's Professor Remnex.

(Wibbling sound effect ends with distant laughter.)

VICTOR: Did you feel that? Like a sudden drop in temperature.

BENNY: Yes, a definite chill. Maybe Broke forgot to switch on the heating.

SLYDE: Joke away, Summerfield. You won't find this very funny for much longer.

BENNY: I don't find it very funny now, Slyde. What are you doing? What have you brought poor Remnex's body here for?

SLYDE: Ah, poor Remnex. I had to kill him, you know. He knew too much. Not a very original motive, I'll grant you, but good enough in the circumstances. The old fool had discovered that I was a follower of the Dark Flame.

BENNY: The Dark Flame. I was right. But the Dark Flame was a cult that died out hundreds of years ago, thousands of years ago.

SLYDE: That is incorrect. The Dark Flame never dies, Summerfield. Somewhere, somehow, it always burns. It can never be extinguished.

VICTOR: What's all this Dark Flame stuff?

BENNY: Oh, just a bunch of psychopaths from way back when who banded together to worship an energy being from another dimension. Everybody thought they were mad. And extinct.

JOSEPH: But everybody was wrong.

BENNY: As usual.

SLYDE: You are in a privileged position. You will be among the first to witness the revitalisation of the Dark Flame, beginning with the resurrection of its revered Emissary and his legion of followers.

JOSEPH: You are insane.

SLYDE: This skull is all that remains of the Dark Flame's Emissary.

VICTOR: That's what we had to dig up.

BENNY: I'm so glad you did.

SLYDE: Within this relic lies the mind of the Emissary, waiting to live again.

BENNY: Right, I have to agree with Joseph here. You're well and truly nuts, Slyde. Within that old skull lies nothing but dust. All the remains of your precious leader's tiny brain, I wouldn't wonder. A dried up fragment of grey matter that will disappear with a good sneeze.

SLYDE: Is that what you think, Summerfield? How pathetic. How prosaic.
JOSEPH: Go on, then. Prove us wrong.
BENNY: Did you have to say that? Honestly, Joseph, he doesn't need any encouragement.
SLYDE: My pleasure.
(Walks away. Distant faint laughter.)
SLYDE: Behold the Emissary of the Dark Flame.
(Distant laughter.)
BENNY: I don't like this one little bit.
VICTOR: Me neither.
JOSEPH: Can we go now?
BENNY: We've got to see what happens.
VICTOR: Speak for yourself. I've had enough of this. First chance I get I'm out of here. Are you with me?
JOSEPH: Absolutely.
BENNY: Look, wait, both of you. We have to find out what's going on.
VICTOR: Why? I'm telling you, Benny. If I get the chance, I am off.
BENNY: You won't get ten yards, Victor. Look at Broke. He's watching us all the time.
VICTOR: Not now he isn't. He's watching Slyde.
SLYDE: Speak to us, O master.
KRULL: I am here, my servant.
BENNY: Oh, Goddess. That's Remnex.
VICTOR: Somehow I doubt it.
SLYDE: Welcome, O master.
KRULL: At last I live again.
JOSEPH: You said Remnex was dead, Professor Benny.
BENNY: He was. He is! He was stabbed through the left eye, right into the brain. Look, you can urgh, you can still see the wound.
KRULL: I live again! Bwahahahahaha!

(Door opens and closes.)

LOMAR: Doctor, I thought you said Ace needed rest.
DOCTOR: She's had her rest, Lomar.
LOMAR: But look, she's still fast asleep. It seems a pity to disturb her.
DOCTOR: Sleep is for Chelonians. Ace, wake up. We've got work to do. Perhaps I went a little heavy with the post-hypnotic trance. Ace, come on, wakey-wakey!
LOMAR: She was hit by a neuro-stunner, Doctor. She could be paralysed.
DOCTOR: Ace, the forces of evil are knocking at our door again. Someone's got to answer it.
LOMAR: Perhaps you'd be better off on your own this time, Doctor.
DOCTOR: What? Without Ace? That would be like Sherlock Holmes without Doctor Watson, Batman without Robin, rhubarb without custard. Come on, Ace. I need you on your feet, not lying here like some sort of prize vegetable.
LOMAR: Doctor, really!

KRULL: How long has it been since I last breathed the air of mortal men?
SLYDE: Generations, O master.
BENNY: About two hours, by my reckoning.
KRULL: And whose body is this?
SLYDE: Nobody important, O master.
KRULL: I sincerely hope that isn't true. I have standards.
SLYDE: I mean, nobody important in comparison to you, O master. His name was Remnex. He was a human scientist of some repute.
KRULL: How very boring. And very old too, by the feel of it.
SLYDE: The best I could manage in the circumstances.
KRULL: Hmm. And why can I only see out of one eye?
SLYDE: When taking his life, I was forced to stab him through the left eye.
KRULL: Unfortunate. The important thing is, did it hurt? Did he suffer?
SLYDE: There was much agony, O master, yes. He writhed and twisted at my feet for several minutes before eventually dying in a cold puddle of his own blood.
KRULL: That's all right, then. We'll let the eye thing drop for the moment, until we can find a more suitable host.
BENNY: This is insane. I saw Remnex dead, saw his body.
JOSEPH: And now you are seeing it again, reactivated. I mean, resurrected.
BENNY: That's not Remnex.
VICTOR: Now you're confusing us. I thought you said it was Remnex.

BENNY: I mean, not him speaking. It sounds like him, sort of, but it isn't him.

JOSEPH: You mean like me. I sound a little like Victor, but I am not Victor.

BENNY: Yes. No. Well, not exactly. I was talking more in terms of some kind of intelligence inhabiting Remnex's body, reanimating his corpse, as it were.

JOSEPH: Sorry.

VICTOR: Well, whatever it is, I've seen enough.

BENNY: You're right. We've got to get out of here.

VICTOR: And now would be the best time, don't you think? With them all distracted by old Remnex's corpse being reanimated like that.

BENNY: Couldn't agree more. We go on the count of three.

JOSEPH: Wait. Do you mean when you say three, or after you say three? I never know which.

BENNY: All right. Listen, when I say run, run. Okay?

JOSEPH: Okay.

BENNY: One, two, three, run!

SLYDE: Stop them!

VICTOR: I'll take that, thank you.

BROKE: He's got the skull!

SLYDE: Blasphemy!

KRULL: Slyde, don't let him get away with it.

BENNY: Oh, come on, run for it.

JOSEPH: Look out, he is armed.

SLYDE: Pathetic creatures.

(Pulse laser fire. Victor cries out.)

BENNY: Victor!

JOSEPH: Victor!

VICTOR: I'm all right. Keep going.

BENNY: But how? Oh, let me go, Broke. (thump)

JOSEPH: Watch it, oaf.

BENNY: Joseph! Oh, let go.

SLYDE: I think not. Trouble must be your middle name, Summerfield.

BENNY: Actually, it's Surprise.

SLYDE: Really. Well, here's one for you.

(Weapon fire, Benny cries out, thud.)

DOCTOR: Ace! McShane. Come on, McShane, look lively. The place is crawling with Daleks.

LOMAR: Still no response.

DOCTOR: There's only one thing for it. (sotto) Dorothy. Dorotheeee?

ACE: (drowsy) My name's Ace, toe-rag.

DOCTOR: Toe-rag. Huh. She used to call me Professor, you know.

ACE: Doctor? Is that you?

DOCTOR: Who else?

ACE: I feel awful.

DOCTOR: I'm sure you do. However, you don't have time to feel awful. Up you get.

VICTOR: Not far now. Not far.

SLYDE: You let him get away, you fool. After him!

VICTOR: Oh hell. Oh hell. Got to move. Come on, Victor, move it,

ACE: What's going on, then, Doctor?

DOCTOR: I wish I knew, Ace. I'm as much in the dark as you are.

ACE: Oh, come on, you must have a plan. You've always got a plan.

DOCTOR: No plan, Ace. Not even a rough idea what to do next.

ACE: But, well, that's not how you operate.

DOCTOR: Ace, I came here to collect Bernice. I didn't think I was going to have to come up with a cunning masterplan to outwit the resurrection of an ancient evil cult.

ACE: Oh, then you should have.

DOCTOR: So it would seem.

ACE: I can't believe Benny's gone. Not like that.

DOCTOR: I can't believe it either.

ACE: Hang on. You think she may still be alive, don't you?

DOCTOR: I didn't say that. But Remnex has disappeared too, Ace. Lomar's checking the rest of the research lab for any sign of him or Benny.

ACE: Remnex? But he got knifed.

DOCTOR: Exactly. Shh. Listen.

ACE: (sotto) It's coming from just around the corner.

DOCTOR: (sotto) Careful, Ace.

ACE: (sotto) Hey, who's this?

DOCTOR: He's wounded. Quick.

ACE: Oh, take it easy, mate.

DOCTOR: It's all right. I'm the Doctor. Rest a moment. He's been hit with a neuro-stun ray.

ACE: He looks in a bad way.

DOCTOR: Yes, neuro-stunner on maximum power, I would say.

ACE: Shoot to kill.

DOCTOR: He's fatally wounded. There's nothing we can do for him.

VICTOR: (feeble gasping) Doctor?

ACE: He's trying to say something.

DOCTOR: Shh. What is it? Who are you?

VICTOR: Victor Farrison.

ACE: Benny's friend. What's he doing here, then?

VICTOR: Only just got away. Here. Here. I took this.

ACE: Try not to talk.

VICTOR: Don't let them get it. (dies)

DOCTOR: He's gone.

ACE: What's he holding?

DOCTOR: Some kind of fossil. A skull!

ACE: Let's have a look. Hmm, must be a few zillion years old.

DOCTOR: He's got quite a grip on it. Now, let's see if I can't oh!

ACE: What is it?

DOCTOR: Oh, I don't know.

ACE: Doctor, what's wrong?

DOCTOR: The skull. It's incredibly time-sensitive. I can barely hold on to it. It's almost parachronic.

ACE: Para, para what?

DOCTOR: Parachronic. It exists partially outside this Time continuum. It could have come from another universe entirely.

ACE: Another universe? What's Benny's dead friend doing with it, then?

DOCTOR: Think about it, Ace. Remember the Dark Flame cult? They worshipped an energy being from another dimension, possibly another universe.

ACE: Are you trying to tell me this guy came all the way from another universe with this old skull?

DOCTOR: I think he came from somewhere much closer than that. But the fact remains that he gave his life to come here with that old skull. We'd better take good care of it. Here.

ACE: Hey, I don't want it.

DOCTOR: Please, Ace. Humans aren't sensitive to the parachronic time field it generates. It won't hurt you, but it makes me feel sick.

ACE: If you say so, Doctor. Hold on, where are you going?

DOCTOR: To find out where our dying friend came from.

ACE: Wait for me.

DOCTOR: No, Ace. I want you to stay here with that skull. Guard it with your life, Ace. It's extremely powerful, and therefore terribly important.

ACE: With my life?

DOCTOR: With your life.

ACE: Oh, right. What should I tell Lomar?

DOCTOR: Nothing.

ACE: That shouldn't be difficult. Where's he going? Do you know, skull? Alas, poor Yorick, you're parachronic. Never did like Shakespeare.

SLYDE: I'll take that, thank you.

ACE: Slyde! Where did you spring from?

SLYDE: Give me the skull, Ace.

ACE: Not likely. What have you done with Benny?

SLYDE: It was necessary to dispose of her.

ACE: Keep back!

SLYDE: Give me the skull.

ACE: Or what? Stun gun at point-blank range? Only this time set on maximum, shoot to kill.

SLYDE: If you insist.

ACE: Well, here's something for you at point-blank range.

(Thump!)

ACE: Catch you later.

DOCTOR: There you are, looking perfectly innocent. A very convenient way of getting rid of rubbish. And used recently, too. (coughs) I know a secret passage when I see one.
(Whoosh.)

DOCTOR: What a rubbish matter transmitter. (coughs and burps.)

DOCTOR: A dark gloomy cave. Huh. I might have known. All secret passages seem to lead to dark gloomy caves. Hello? Anybody home? Must be early closing.

JOSEPH: Over here.

DOCTOR: Over where?

JOSEPH: Here.

DOCTOR: Ah, there. Why didn't you say so. Hello there. I'm the Doctor.

JOSEPH: Oh, I am glad you've come, Doctor.

DOCTOR: You were expecting me?

JOSEPH: Sort of. It's a trap, you see.

DOCTOR: Oh.

BROKE: Stand where you are and do not move.

JOSEPH: Sorry.

DOCTOR: Oh, it's quite all right. You get used to this sort of thing. Should I raise my hands?

BROKE: Yes.

DOCTOR: There. Well, this is going really well, isn't it.

ACE: Professor Lomar, quick, he's after me.

LOMAR: Ace! What's going on?

ACE: I've no idea, but your mate's back and he's trying to kill me.

LOMAR: You mean Slyde?

ACE: That's what I said. He killed Benny and Remnex, and now he's after us.

LOMAR: I think you'd better calm down.

ACE: Don't tell me to calm down. The Doctor's disappeared too!

LOMAR: You'd better tell me the full story.

KRULL: Hello, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Remnex? Is that really you?

KRULL: Yes, and no.

DOCTOR: Well, make up your mind.

KRULL: I may have the body of a weak human, but I have the mind of the Emissary of the Dark Flame. So pleased to meet you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: The feeling is not mutual.

ACE: There isn't time to explain, Lomar. Slyde's a member of the Dark Flame cult. He could be here any minute and he's armed.

LOMAR: So are you.

ACE: Exactly. So if he comes in here, one of us is going to get hurt. Preferably not me.

LOMAR: I think there's been enough of that already, Ace. Could you still be suffering from that stun blast?

ACE: Never mind that. Listen. The Doctor and I found some man wandering around the facility, right? He gave us a skull. Slyde wants it back, very badly.

LOMAR: A skull? Perhaps you'd better let me have it, then. I'll look after it for you.

ACE: No. Slyde will stop at nothing to get it back. He's already murdered Remnex and Benny!

LOMAR: Are you sure? These are serious accusations.

(Door opens.)

LOMAR: Ah, Slyde.

ACE: Oh no.

SLYDE: Ah, found you at last.

ACE: Look out, Lomar, he's got a gun.

SLYDE: Stop her.

ACE: Lomar! Move! Get out of the way! Lomar!

LOMAR: I'm afraid not, my dear young lady. You see, I also belong to the cult of the Dark Flame.

[Part Three]

ACE: Oh, hell.

LOMAR: Now, be a good girl and give me the relic.

ACE: Sorry, no can do.

SLYDE: Where is the skull?

ACE: I haven't got it. Look. See? No skull.

LOMAR: What?

ACE: I threw it away, didn't I. Piece of old rubbish like that.

SLYDE: You'd better be joking, you little witch.

ACE: I'm not laughing.

SLYDE: I'm so going to enjoy killing you.

LOMAR: Wait, Slyde. She's no use to us dead. If she's hidden the skull, we need her to find it.

ACE: That's right. Only one problem. I'm not going to help you. Here, catch!

LOMAR: What? What is it?

SLYDE: I don't argh!

(Hissing gas, coughing.)

SLYDE: Some kind of smoke grenade.

LOMAR: Get after her! Now!

BROKE: In there, scum, if you'd be so kind.

DOCTOR: Thank you very much.

(Door clangs shut.)

JOSEPH: Oh, my gyros.

BENNY: Doctor!

DOCTOR: Benny!

BENNY: What the hell are you doing here?

DOCTOR: I'm a prisoner of the Dark Flame cult.

BENNY: I can see that. I was rather hoping you were here to rescue me.

DOCTOR: Ah.

JOSEPH: Yes, Professor Benny's been telling me all about you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: All good, I hope?

BENNY: Well, some of it.

JOSEPH: Only we were sort of pinning our hopes on you.

DOCTOR: I see. So how do you explain your little trap back there?

JOSEPH: Yes, well, sorry about that. Broke was threatening to harm Professor Benny here if I didn't do it exactly as he instructed.

DOCTOR: Hmm.

BENNY: Oh, it really isn't Joseph's fault, Doctor. He was forced into it against his better programming.

DOCTOR: Oh, that's all right. I recognise a Mark 4 service droid when I see one. A decent lot, on the whole.

JOSEPH: We aim to please, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Are you all right, Bernice?

BENNY: Never better, Doctor. You know how much I love languishing in cold wet dungeons.

DOCTOR: I know. But I still think it's time we were leaving.

BENNY: Sonic screwdriver?

DOCTOR: In my other jacket.

BENNY: Complete set of universal lock-picks?

DOCTOR: In my *other* jacket.

BENNY: Nitro-9?

DOCTOR: In Ace's other jacket. But this should do the trick.

BENNY: Your umbrella?

DOCTOR: Watch. (bangs on door) Excuse me, you out there! Come and open this door! I want to speak to someone in charge!

BENNY: Several centuries experience of being locked up by megalomaniacs, and that's the best he can come up with.

JOSEPH: I'm starting to get worried.

LOMAR: She can't have just disappeared, Slyde.

SLYDE: She may very well have done. I'll check the transmat.

LOMAR: I doubt she'd chance that.

SLYDE: And what about that Time Lord?

LOMAR: The Doctor? I don't know about him. He's probably worked it out by now. He was already suspicious.

SLYDE: We should never have allowed him to come here.

LOMAR: I'm sure the Emissary has his reasons for wanting the Doctor here. But never mind that now. We've got to find that skull.

BENNY: All right, I'm getting bored now.

DOCTOR: I spy with my little eye

BENNY: If you even

JOSEPH: Someone is coming.

DOCTOR: On your feet, Benny.

BENNY: I'm getting too old for languishing in dungeons.

DOCTOR: Nonsense. You're in the prime of life, for a human.

BENNY: You're such a comfort, you know that?

(Door opens.)

DOCTOR: Ah, there you are, Broke. And about time too.

BROKE: My master wishes to speak to you.

DOCTOR: What if I don't wish to speak to him?

BROKE: I'm to slit the Professor's throat, sir.

BENNY: I wouldn't want to put you to any trouble.

BROKE: Professor Summerfield and the robot stay here.

BENNY: Oh, come on. I've done my fair share of languishing. I need to stretch my legs.

JOSEPH: If I stay in here a minute longer, I'm going to develop a very serious rust problem.

BROKE: I really must insist.

DOCTOR: They come with me.

BROKE: Now you're just being difficult, sir.

DOCTOR: I don't want Joseph rusting to pieces, and Professor Summerfield here is, by her own admission, getting too old to be languishing in a dungeon.

BENNY: Hey.

DOCTOR: Be careful. You don't want to keep your master waiting, Broke. I'm sure he wouldn't be pleased.

BROKE: All right. Come on then. But no funny business.

LOMAR: This is ridiculous, Slyde. We've looked everywhere. The transmat's not been used, so she's still somewhere on Orbos. There's no other way off this research station. Where's the little witch got to?

SLYDE: What about the Doctor's conveyance?

LOMAR: The Tardis? No, it's still in my office.

SLYDE: There is one place we haven't looked, Lomar. The main laboratory.

LOMAR: She wouldn't. No. The Black Light converter. Come on, Slyde.

KRULL: Doctor, how nice to see you again. And your friends.

DOCTOR: Who are you really?

KRULL: I am the Emissary.

DOCTOR: I never trust people who hide behind titles. What's happened to Remnex? You're using his body. What about his mind?

KRULL: Gone. Empty. Remnex is dead. This body is nothing more than a useful shell for my will.

DOCTOR: Oh, Remnex.

KRULL: As bodies go, it's not ideal, I know, but sometimes one has to make do. Sorry about the smell.

BENNY: Now that you mention it.

DOCTOR: Remnex's body is beginning to putrefy. How long do you expect it to last?

KRULL: Long enough.

DOCTOR: Long enough for what? I can't see you taking over the universe in a decaying corpse.

KRULL: I see. You want me to reveal my great plan.

DOCTOR: If you insist. But keep it brief. I'm expected on Cantanimus Prime yesterday.

KRULL: I won't keep you a moment longer than necessary.

BENNY: Hallelujah.

JOSEPH: It is time we had some good news.

KRULL: I am the Emissary of the Dark Flame, Doctor. I have existed for thousands of years, moving from body to body, preparing the way for the end of the universe.

DOCTOR: That's a big job for one man, even a megalomaniac like yourself.

KRULL: You mock, of course, because that is all that is left for you to do, but I am talking about the coming of the Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: Ah, the coming of the Dark Flame.

BENNY: Yes, the coming of the Dark Flame. What is that, exactly? Doesn't sound healthy to me.

KRULL: The Dark Flame is the burning heat of absolute evil. I am but its Emissary in this universe.

BENNY: Never heard of it, sorry.

KRULL: But you have. The flame burns everywhere and in everyone. Nothing and no-one is proof against its heat. It smoulders quietly and invisibly in all of us, waiting to be fanned into a blaze.

BENNY: Cobblers.

KRULL: Soon you will feel differently.

BENNY: I doubt it.

KRULL: Really. Let me promise you something. Before very long, you will feel the heat of the Dark Flame burning inside you, and there will be nothing you can do to resist it.

JOSEPH: You are insane.

DOCTOR: Don't provoke him, Joseph.

KRULL: You see? The Doctor doesn't doubt me. He knows the truth. He has felt the Dark Flame's touch, haven't you, Doctor?

DOCTOR: I won't be drawn into this little conceit that easily.

KRULL: Scared?

DOCTOR: Cautious.

BENNY: Oh, come on, Doctor. The Dark Flame is just some discredited old cult no-one believes in. We know the worst of it from history. They say its followers are all dead and buried here. That's why this lunatic had poor Victor Farrison digging around in the dirt for some forgotten old relic.

DOCTOR: Bernice.

BENNY: No, seriously. There were mad cults like this all over the galaxy, and all of them die out eventually. The evidence is all around us. Rotten remains of every pathetic soul who was ever sucked in by this guy's stories, buried beneath the surface of this cesspit planet.

KRULL: The cult is not dead, Professor Summerfield, just waiting, waiting for my command, for the Dark Flame to warm their cold flesh and bones once more. Allow me to demonstrate.

BENNY: What's he up to?

DOCTOR: Proving a point.

BENNY: What's happening?

JOSEPH: The ground is moving.

DOCTOR: I think the Emissary is calling up some reinforcements.

(Rumble. Just call him Ezekiel.)

BENNY: Reinforcements?

DOCTOR: Some old friends of his.

BENNY: I so don't like the look of this.

JOSEPH: What are they?

DOCTOR: The bones of long dead men spat out of the earth like so much gristle.

BENNY: They're moving, joining together.

JOSEPH: Reforming.

DOCTOR: Regenerating.

BENNY: Keep back!

KRULL: I'm afraid they will only obey my will, Professor Summerfield.

BENNY: Let go. Get your bony old hands off.

DOCTOR: Don't resist them, Benny. They have the strength of the undead.

BENNY: Oh, I don't see much in the way of muscles or skin or anything.

DOCTOR: These poor creatures have just clawed their way out of the grave, Bernice. They won't have any trouble tearing you apart.

BENNY: Oh, good point. Okay, not resisting. Not resisting.

KRULL: Welcome back, my followers,

(Door opens.)

SLYDE: There are plenty of places to hide in here.

(Door closes.)

LOMAR: Ace, we know you're in here.

ACE: (distant) Hiya!

LOMAR: It's over, girl. This is the main Orbos laboratory. There's no other exit. You're trapped in here.

ACE: True enough, but I've got a fistful of smart bomb here. One false move from either of you chumps and this whole lab is history. History in lots of little pieces.

SLYDE: Don't be foolish. You'd be killing yourself..

ACE: Yep.

SLYDE: Don't you care?

ACE: Look, Slyde, if I'm gonna get killed here, then I'd rather it was my finger on the trigger than yours. Okay?

LOMAR: Ace, my dear, there's no need for all these heroics. All we want is the skull.

ACE: There's only one way you'll get your hands on that, Lomar. You'll have to kill me first. But then, of course, you'll never get your hands on your precious skull, will you? This round to me, yeah?

KRULL: So now perhaps you will believe in the power of the Dark Flame.

BENNY: Yeah, okay, summoning an army of walking cadavers from the earth is quite convincing, I'll admit.

DOCTOR: Bernice!

BENNY: Doctor, in case you hadn't noticed, we're surrounded.

DOCTOR: What do you want from us, Emissary, or whatever you call yourself?

KRULL: A small matter of theft.

BENNY: Theft?

KRULL: Your erstwhile colleague, Victor Farrison, found a particular remnant here on Marran Alpha. You called it a relic, and so it is. All that remains of a man who lived ten thousand years ago. Vilus Krull.

JOSEPH: That old skull?

DOCTOR: I think I'm beginning to see.

JOSEPH: What has happened to Victor?

DOCTOR: I'm afraid he's dead.

BENNY: Dead?

JOSEPH: Dead?

DOCTOR: He was gravely injured. He made it as far as the Orbos facility, but I think the transmat process was too much for him.

BENNY: Oh, Goddess. Poor Victor.

JOSEPH: Dead?

DOCTOR: I'm very sorry.

JOSEPH: Dead?

BENNY: Joseph, you all right?

KRULL: He's a robot. He can't feel anything.

BENNY: Can you?

KRULL: Don't concern yourself unduly, Professor. Victor Farrison is dead. So what? Every single one of my followers was dead once, and yet here they are again among us, given life by the warmth of the Dark Flame.

JOSEPH: Are you saying you could bring Victor back?

KRULL: Yes, more or less.

BENNY: No thanks, not like this.

KRULL: Please yourself. Now, where were we? Farrison escaped with the relic. Where is it?

DOCTOR: Don't look at me, I don't know.

KRULL: Don't even attempt to bluff me, Time Lord. You've only lived for a thousand years. Compared to me, you're an infant. I can see inside your pitiful little mind, tear out your pathetic lies.

DOCTOR: Go on, then. Come inside my pathetic little mind, tear out my lies, if you can.

KRULL: The Dark Flame will burn that insolent mind from your head, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Maybe. But not right now, eh? You need that old skull first, don't you?

KRULL: Grr, take them back to the dungeon.

BENNY: Oh goody.

DOCTOR: We can find our own way back, thank you.

(Whoosh!)

BROKE: Good evening, ma'am.

LOMAR: Eh? Oh, Broke. And these are?

BROKE: Deceased members of the cult of the Dark Flame, recently resurrected.

LOMAR: I see. You'd better take me to the Emissary immediately.

(Walking.)

BROKE: Is there a problem, ma'am?

LOMAR: Nothing for you to worry about, Broke.

BROKE: Only our master is in a frightful mood, ma'am. He is unable to find the relic.

LOMAR: Oh, marvellous.

BENNY: What precisely is this Dark Flame thing, then?

DOCTOR: The blackest remnant of an interstellar cataclysm.

BENNY: I see. No, actually, I don't. Can't you be a little bit more specific? The Emissary said the Dark Flame brought all his followers back from the grave. Is it a living force, or an entity, or just some sort of pseudo-philosophical mumbo-jumbo?

DOCTOR: All of those things, and more besides. It's actually a negative energy being from a dark universe.

BENNY: A dark universe being what?

DOCTOR: Not easily defined. Most of what we know is based on conjecture. The Time Lords believe that it is one of the pocket dimensions forced out of the Space-Time Continuum by the collapse of this universe.

BENNY: This universe?

DOCTOR: Billions of years in the future, Benny, when this universe finally dies, the rules of Time and Space will be twisted in ways that no one can understand. A sentient force for pure evil could stand at a privileged position at the end of Time, where nothing is absolute and anything, anything can be changed.

BENNY: Sounds serious when you put it like that.

DOCTOR: It is serious.

BENNY: This skull, then, important is it?

DOCTOR: Oh, undoubtedly. It's parachronic, in that it exists partially outside of this Time and Space Continuum, which would make it ideal for, say, controlling a Black Light explosion.

BENNY: Isn't that what they're planning on Orbos?

DOCTOR: Yes. Rather convenient, wouldn't you say?

BENNY: Very. Although I can't say I'm entirely sure why. Oh, it sounds like the sort of scientific clap-trap you'd know all about, then.

DOCTOR: Scientific clap-trap? Bernice.

BENNY: Oh, you know, all that reverse the polarity nonsense and dimensionally transcendental stuff.

DOCTOR: Yes, well, when you put it like that, it does sound rather silly, doesn't it? But let me tell you a thing or two about Black Light.

KRELL: Ah, Lomar.

LOMAR: Master. It's good to see you. You look, well, a lot like Remnex.

KRELL: Never mind that.

LOMAR: And these guards. Impressive. And bony.

KRELL: All that remains of my original followers, Lomar. I never like anything to go to waste.

LOMAR: Quite.

KRELL: Where is the relic, Lomar?

LOMAR: We have a problem there, O master.

ACE: (distant) Well, here we are then, Slyde, all nice and cosy. Me over here right where you can't see me, holding this smart bomb, you over there wondering what I'm gonna do next.

SLYDE: You don't fool me, girl.

ACE: Girl? A long time since I thought of myself as a girl, Slyde.

SLYDE: You won't use a bomb in here.

ACE: Think I'm bluffing?

SLYDE: Think I care? You're insignificant compared with the Dark Flame. You're a tiny moment, the smallest fly waiting to disappear in the heat.

ACE: You really believe all that stuff, don't you.

SLYDE: I believe in the power of the Dark Flame and its unstoppable burning fire. I believe it will sweep through this universe, destroying everything in its path. When it comes, it won't even notice you.

ACE: But you need the skull first, right?

SLYDE: We'll find it soon enough.

KRULL: I have a task for you, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Oh, you're still here. And Lomar. Oh, don't tell me you've been sucked into this nonsense as well.

LOMAR: Doctor.

DOCTOR: If anything happens to Ace, Lomar.

LOMAR: She's perfectly all right, Doctor. In fact, she's sitting in the Black Light laboratory on Orbos clutching an explosive device.

BENNY: You go, girl.

LOMAR: And threatening to blow the whole project to Kingdom Come. You gave her the skull, Doctor. We want it back.

DOCTOR: Well, you know, Ace can be very stubborn when she wants to be.

KRULL: We know the skull must be somewhere on Orbos, Doctor. If my servants there can't find it, then you must, or I will have Professor Summerfield killed.

BENNY: Oh, it's always got to come down to threats, hasn't it?

KRULL: Crude, I admit, but effective. The skull, Doctor. You've got ten minutes before my followers pull Professor Summerfield limb from limb. Literally.

BENNY: Ow! Oh, let go.

DOCTOR: Ten minutes?

KRULL: And just so I know you're not going to do anything stupid, two of my followers can accompany you.

DOCTOR: And Lomar. I want her to come too. She knows her way around the Orbos facility.

KRULL: Very well. Go with him, Lomar.

LOMAR: Master.

(Whoosh.)

DOCTOR: Is that really the best you could do, Lomar? I feel like I've been flushed up a toilet.

LOMAR: The laboratory's this way.

DOCTOR: All right, but your two bony friends can stay here. I don't like the way they're looking at me.

LOMAR: They haven't got any eyes.

DOCTOR: Exactly.

LOMAR: All right, if it'll make this any quicker. You two, stay here.

(Walking.)

DOCTOR: Now, perhaps we can talk.

LOMAR: Don't try anything stupid, Doctor. I'm armed.

DOCTOR: Oh, Lomar, I thought better of you than that. A gun?

LOMAR: I'll use it if necessary.

DOCTOR: And just what will make it necessary, Lomar? What has made you side with the Emissary and his Dark Flame Cult. I mean, they stand for nothing but evil. You're a reasonable woman, aren't you?

LOMAR: I'm a follower of the Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: That's not what I asked. Can't you see this is all wrong? Threatening people like this, raising the dead, trying to bring forth a terrible evil into the universe?

LOMAR: Right and wrong is simply a question of perspective.

DOCTOR: That's a philosopher's answer. I mean, you're supposed to be a scientist. Practical, intelligent. Think what you're doing. What do you hope to achieve?

LOMAR: All my life I have worked to this end, the harnessing of Black Light. If I can succeed in tapping into the energy reserves of the Time-Space Continuum, then all of this will have been worth it.

DOCTOR: You've fallen in with the cult of the Dark Flame just so that you can play around with Black Light?

That's worse still. It's totally irresponsible. Lomar, your actions could result in the destruction of all creation.

LOMAR: You're exaggerating, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Am I? You've made a deal with the Devil. How does it feel to betray the entire universe?

LOMAR: I don't feel anything except for the approaching warmth of the Dark Flame in my mind.

DOCTOR: Your mind has been eaten away by the Dark Flame, and so will everyone else's if the Emissary has his way. I can't allow that to happen.

LOMAR: It's not in your power to stop it, Doctor.

(Door opens.)

LOMAR: We're here, Slyde.

SLYDE: So I see. Greetings, Doctor.

(Door closes.)

DOCTOR: Hello again, Slyde. I haven't missed you at all.

ACE: (distant) Doctor, is that you?

DOCTOR: Hello, Ace. Sorry, I seem to have left you in the lurch.

ACE: Where have you been?

DOCTOR: Here and there. Bernice sends her best wishes, by the way.

ACE: She's alive! Excellent.

DOCTOR: Well, at the moment she's being slowly being pulled apart by a pair of living skeletons, but otherwise she's fine.

ACE: You what?

DOCTOR: Actually, we need to talk. Let me have a quiet word with her, would you, Lomar? She can be a little temperamental.

LOMAR: Make it quick. Professor Summerfield hasn't got long left.

(Footsteps.)

DOCTOR: Ace, listen to me.

ACE: Is this some kind of trick?

DOCTOR: We're in a spot of bother. I need you to give me the skull.

ACE: But you said

DOCTOR: Just to me.

ACE: (sotto) You've got a plan, haven't you, Doctor?

DOCTOR: (sotto) I've always got a plan.

ACE: (sotto) That's what worries me.

BROKE: Ah, the robot. I wondered where you'd skulked off to.

JOSEPH: I cannot believe Victor is dead. You killed him.

BROKE: Well, not me personally. I can't take credit for that.

JOSEPH: You despicable

BROKE: Oh, spare me your computerised sentiment. It's nothing but pre-programmed passion, a subroutine in your central processor.

JOSEPH: Liar!

BROKE: Oh! Let go of me, you pathetic machine!

JOSEPH: Oh, what have I done?

BROKE: Signed your own deactivation warrant.

(Click. Joseph powers down.)

ACE: The waste disposal. Are you sure it's safe?

DOCTOR: Safe is a relative term, Ace.
ACE: I don't like the look of it.
LOMAR: That's irrelevant. Where's the skull?
ACE: I'm only giving it to the Doctor. You can go and take a running jump.
DOCTOR: Give me the skull, Ace.
ACE: Over here. There.
DOCTOR: Thank you.
ACE: By the way, I'm not going in that thing.
LOMAR: It's just an ordinary matter transmitter.
ACE: For rubbish. You might qualify, but I don't.
DOCTOR: I could make a few adjustments to the focussing coil, Ace, if that would help.
ACE: Forget it.
DOCTOR: I said, if that would help.
ACE: Oh. Well. Okay. If you're sure.
DOCTOR: (sotto) Trust me.
LOMAR: What are you doing?
DOCTOR: Oh, just a couple of improvements. I can't help tinkering. There, that should prove a much more pleasant experience.
LOMAR: It's some kind of trick.
DOCTOR: No. You know, it's just an ordinary matter transmitter. Come on, in you hop.

KRULL: The Doctor is taking his time.
BENNY: He'll be back any moment.
KRULL: You hope.
BENNY: You don't scare me. I've travelled with the Doctor for quite some time, and I've seen scarier things than you.
KRULL: Is that a fact, Professor Summerfield? Perhaps you're simply not paying enough attention. Look at me. Look into my eyes.
BENNY: Eye.
KRULL: It doesn't matter which. Look into the one eye of this old man's corpse, or look into the bloody ruin of the other, I don't care.
BENNY: What am I looking for, exactly?
KRULL: The future. Your future.
BENNY: Sorry. Can't see anything at all.
KRULL: Precisely.
BENNY: No future.
KRULL: You can let her go now.
(Whoosh!)
DOCTOR: Hello again. I hope we haven't kept you waiting too long.
ACE: Hiya, Benny! Hey, you okay? You look a bit funny.
BENNY: Oh, hello, Ace. No, no, I'm fine thanks. Good to see you again.
KRULL: The skull, Doctor.
DOCTOR: Oh yes. Oh, I almost forgot. Here it is.
ACE: Ugly, isn't he?
DOCTOR: It's very ancient, decayed, rotten. All that remains of a man called Vilus Krull.
KRULL: Give it to me.
DOCTOR: Does it remind you of anyone?
KRULL: It, it is very, very old, Doctor.
DOCTOR: Hmm. I don't suppose you can remember what you looked like then. Young, fit, alive, the first man to make contact with the negative energy being from the end of the universe.
KRULL: The Dark Flame gave me power.
DOCTOR: Oh yes, it allowed you to live for ever, after a fashion. Transferring your mind from body to body down through the centuries, making sure the cult of the Dark Flame grew and grew, and all it left behind of Vilus Krull was this pathetic remnant. A skull. Touched by a power, of course, which lent it certain properties. It's no longer fully a part of this Space-Time Continuum.
KRULL: It is all that remains of me.
DOCTOR: And it is now the perfect control element for a Black Light convertor. The Dark Flame has been planning this for a long time, hasn't it?
KRULL: Give it to me, Doctor.
DOCTOR: No.
KRULL: Guards.
DOCTOR: Ace, catch!
ACE: Got it.

DOCTOR: Throw it into the transmat field.
ACE: Here it goes! Oh, well caught, Benny. Now chuck it into the transmat.
DOCTOR: I've recalibrated the transmat, Benny. It will completely destroy it. Throw it now!
ACE: What are you waiting for?
BENNY: I'm not waiting for anything.
ACE: Then chuck it away. Now!
DOCTOR: Bernice.
BENNY: It feels so ancient. I can feel the age of it running through my fingers.
KRULL: Bernice, give me the skull.
ACE: Benny!
BENNY: Here, O master.
KRULL: Thank you, my dear. Thank you very much indeed.

[Part Four]

DOCTOR: No.
KRULL: Bernice has had a change of heart since you last saw her, Doctor.
ACE: You bastard.
KRULL: Oh do wash your mouth out, young lady. Bernice Summerfield is mine, aren't you, my dear?
BENNY: Yes, master.
ACE: Like hell she is!
(Rattle of bones.)
ACE: Ah! Let me go!
KRULL: You're quick, girl, but not quick enough *my* guards.
BENNY: On your knees before the Emissary, Ace.
(Thump!)
ACE: Ah! Ah! Benny?
KRULL: What will it take to convince you? Hit her again, Bernice, my dear.
BENNY: I've been waiting a long time to do this.
(Thumps galore!)
ACE: Ah! Benny! No! Stop it! You don't
BENNY: I always thought you were an ignorant little (more thumps)
DOCTOR: Enough of this, Bernice! Stop it! Ace! All right, Emissary, you've made your point. Stop her.
KRULL: Halt, Bernice.
BENNY: I enjoyed that.
ACE: I'll get you for this.
DOCTOR: Ace, that's not Bernice.
ACE: I don't understand.
KRULL: (laughs) You could say that Bernice has seen the dark.
DOCTOR: No, this is nothing more than simple mind control.
KRULL: There is nothing simple about the power of the Dark Flame, Time Lord. She has given herself to the dark side. You know this to be true. Why do you deny it?
DOCTOR: Let Bernice speak for herself. Let go your grip on her mind.
BENNY: There is no grip on my mind, Doctor. I have embraced the Dark Flame.
DOCTOR: As someone once said, cobblers.
KRULL: Well, I'm sure we could argue about that all night, but I'm afraid I'm working to a tight schedule. It's time for us to go.
BROKE: Master.
KRULL: Broke, where have you been?
BROKE: A small altercation with the robot, sir.
DOCTOR: Where's Joseph? What have you done to him?
BROKE: Scrambled its omnitronic brain. And not before time.
KRULL: Never mind all that. We're ready to leave.
BROKE: Excuse me, sir. What about me?
KRULL: What about you?
BROKE: As you can see, master, I am badly injured.
KRULL: So, no use to me. Goodbye.
BROKE: But, but, but sir, if I'm done for, then may I offer up my own mortal remains for your personal use?
KRULL: No. Thank you, Broke, but no. I have something rather better in mind.
BROKE: But sir.
KRULL: You're dismissed, Broke. No, wait.
BROKE: Sir?
KRULL: The transmat. I presume it was you who kept it operational over the last few months?

BROKE: Indeed, sir.

KRULL: The Doctor recalibrated it to destroy my skull. Please undo the damage he did, there's a good chap.

BROKE: Oh yes, sir. Easily fixed, I'm sure.

KRULL: Get to it, then. Now, Slyde, Lomar and Bernice, come with me.

DOCTOR: Wait.

KRULL: No, Doctor. You've lost. You've run out of time and ideas and friends.

DOCTOR: I don't think so. I mean, why don't you show us how to follow the Dark Flame like Bernice? Then we could all be together, one big happy cult.

KRULL: I think not, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Oh, come on. Benny's swallowed it hook, line and sinker. Give us the same chance. I've never worshipped a negative energy being before.

KRULL: You're trying my patience, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Let us share the power of the Dark Flame. Help us to see the darkness. Please, just one chance to give ourselves over to evil. Just think what I could do for you. I could help with the Black Light detonation, help you throw open the gates of this universe to let the Dark Flame in.

KRULL: You know, you really are a very irritating man, Doctor.

BROKE: Master, the transmat is ready for you to use.

KRULL: Thank you, Broke. You may lie down and die now.

BROKE: But, but, but master (gurgle, thud)

DOCTOR: Was that necessary?

KRULL: No, probably not. But I have all I need now. Goodbye.

(Whoosh!)

ACE: Benny, please, come back.

DOCTOR: Don't waste your breath, Ace. She's gone.

(Whoosh!)

KRULL: Lomar, this old body is growing weaker by the moment.

LOMAR: Yes, master. It was old and feeble when Remnex was alive.

KRULL: How very thoughtful of you to choose such a useful vessel for my will. I may need to transfer to a fresher, better, body before long.

LOMAR: Master.

KRULL: I've already seen one I quite like. How do you fancy it, Bernice?

BENNY: It would be an honour, O master.

KRULL: (laughs) I knew you would say that. You'd have to die first, of course. My will can only be contained within a fresh cadaver.

BENNY: I understand.

KRULL: Do you, my dear. Do you really.

ACE: Come on, Doctor, we've got to get after them.

DOCTOR: If we give them a few seconds to leave the waste disposal room, then we can use the transmat.

BROKE: No.

DOCTOR: And then I

BROKE: No. You can't. I'm afraid that will be impossible. I have disabled the transmat system to stop you following my master. You cannot escape.

ACE: What? Why, you stupid old fossil?

BROKE: I have lived on Marran Alpha all my life, kept here to find the last remnant of Vilus Krull, to serve the Dark Flame until the day I die. This day. My duty is finished here. I've just fixed the matter transmitter so that it can never be used again. Long live Vilus Krull!

DOCTOR: Broke, you still want to help the Dark Flame even after what the Emissary, Vilus Krull, has just done to you? Discarded you like an old sock.

ACE: Typical fanatic, stupid to the end.

BROKE: I swore to serve my master to my last breath. (thud)

ACE: You just have.

DOCTOR: Oh, Ace.

ACE: Oh, good riddance to him. Well, this is just great.

DOCTOR: Ace, that wasn't Benny, you know, back there.

ACE: Yeah, so you said.

DOCTOR: The Emissary was controlling her mind, pulling her strings like a puppet.

ACE: Was he? I can still feel the bruises. You know, I could have handled her, Doctor, if those skeleton things hadn't been holding me back. I could have done

DOCTOR: What, attack Benny? Unarmed combat to the death with your best friend?

ACE: Oh, I don't know.

DOCTOR: Everything she did, everything she said, that was the Emissary, not Bernice. Inside, I imagine she

would be screaming, outraged but powerless to stop him. I wonder what damage he's done to her. Benny won't have surrendered control of her mind very easily.

ACE: How can you be sure it was just the Emissary controlling her mind?

DOCTOR: Because I'm pretty certain he was controlling Lomar too. Possibly Slyde as well, although he is a nasty piece of work in his own right. But the Emissary wouldn't try the same thing on me however much I goaded him.

ACE: Why not?

DOCTOR: Well, my guess is that he simply didn't have the spare mental capacity. As strong-willed as Benny is, it would have been a different thing altogether to dominate my mind so thoroughly. Not, I think, impossible, but more than the Emissary could manage at this stage. Not without relinquishing his grip on the others, anyway.

ACE: Why not me, then?

DOCTOR: What would be the point? He already had Benny.

ACE: But what for?

DOCTOR: Well, think about it. The Emissary's will is currently inhabiting the body of the late lamented Remnex. Not the greatest body a mind like this could have. It wouldn't last much longer. He'll need to move into something else very soon.

ACE: Benny?

DOCTOR: It seems logical. He doesn't need her mind intact, unlike Lomar and Slyde.

ACE: That's horrible. But how can we stop him, stuck down here? Now that Broke's wrecked the transmitter

DOCTOR: I've been thinking about that. Where's Joseph?

SLYDE: O master, we have prepared everything .

KRULL: Good. There isn't a moment to lose, Slyde. I can feel the Dark Flame growing impatient, and this frail body will not last the night.

SLYDE: The Black Light converter requires only the relic of Vilus Krull to be installed in place of this isochronite component.

KRULL: The relic of Vilus Krull. The man I was a thousand lifetimes ago, young and virile, now no more than this brittle calcified shell.

LOMAR: Surely it's best not to dwell on these thoughts, O master.

KRULL: What could you know about it, Lomar? What if you had to give up your own flesh and blood? Can you imagine what it feels like to live inside a corpse like a maggot? For centuries I have known nothing but the feel of dead flesh and the cold congealed blood thick in its veins.

LOMAR: All I know is that the power of the Dark Flame is great, O master. Your dead flesh will be warmed by its presence.

KRULL: There is no warmth for me anymore, Lomar. This cold, stiff form is all I have left, and an old forgotten skull. Look at it.

LOMAR: Master.

KRULL: It's disgusting.

SLYDE: It is powerful, O master. Like your everlasting will, it has thrown off the chains of Time. Allow me to install it in the machine.

KRULL: Yes. But first, Bernice.

BENNY: Master.

KRULL: I can't offer you much in this old fool's body, my dear, but I can offer you the dead lips of my own original face. Take the skull.

BENNY: Yes, master.

KRULL: Kiss it.

BENNY: Yes, master. (kiss)

KRULL: Oh, but I long for you.

BENNY: And I you, master.

KRULL: If only you meant that. Not that it matters ultimately. Before long, I'll have you forever.

(Powers up.)

JOSEPH: Oh, who turned the lights off? Oh, hello, Doctor, Ace.

DOCTOR: Joseph, listen to me. The Emissary and his friends are well on their way to winning. We're stuck here with no chance of escape. Broke sabotaged the transmat system. It's vital we repair it.

JOSEPH: From this end? You are joking.

DOCTOR: Believe me, I am not in a jovial frame of mind.

JOSEPH: But there is no relay pad.

DOCTOR: It must be disguised.

JOSEPH: No relay pad, no pattern generators, nothing.

DOCTOR: It's around here somewhere. It must be. Try and listen for a hollow sound.

ACE: Doctor, you'd better get a move on. The undead are on the move.

DOCTOR: What?

ACE: The skeleton guys. I think they're getting suspicious.

DOCTOR: You'll have to hold them off. If they get too close

ACE: Hold them off? With what?

DOCTOR: Ace, do I have to think of everything? I'm trying to repair a matter transmitter here.

ACE: I've got no weapons.

DOCTOR: Here, use this if you have to.

ACE: Your umbrella.

DOCTOR: Yes, and try not to damage it.

ACE: Hmm, thanks.

JOSEPH: Doctor, is this what you're looking for?

DOCTOR: What have you found?

JOSEPH: Something buried here.

DOCTOR: Let me help.

JOSEPH: Oh, that's all right. I'm programmed for this kind of thing. That's what got Victor and me into this mess in the first place, digging around down here. Look out.

DOCTOR: Oh, well done, Joseph. You've uncovered the matter transmitters relay circuit.

JOSEPH: What a mess. Broke knew what he was doing when he messed up this lot.

DOCTOR: Fortunately I know what I'm doing when it comes to fixing it.

JOSEPH: You cannot fix that, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I must.

ACE: Doctor, Joseph, they're closing in.

DOCTOR: Well, hold them off, Ace.

ACE: Right, you lot, come and get me. Ha! Missed. My turn. Gotcha. En garde! Ha, ha.

DOCTOR: This shouldn't take long, Joseph.

JOSEPH: Good. We do not have long.

DOCTOR: Broke has knocked out the control linkage. It's only a matter of reconnecting them.

ACE: Wallop! And those teeth are history. Again. Doctor, hurry up. I can't hold them off much longer.

KRULL: Take the skull, Lomar, the last scrap of the man I once was.

LOMAR: Your sacrifice is an inspiration, master.

KRULL: Put it in the machine. Begin the process.

SLYDE: Wait, Lomar.

LOMAR: What's the matter, Slyde?

SLYDE: The isochronite element, it's missing.

LOMAR: So? We don't need it anymore. We have the skull of Vilus Krull.

SLYDE: I'm just wondering where it's gone, that's all.

KRULL: How much longer do you think I can stand here in this decrepit form? Begin the process.

(Ace effort, bones rattling.)

ACE: Oh, come on. Where are they all coming from? Oh, clear off.

DOCTOR: Keep it up, Ace. Just a few moments longer. Oh no.

JOSEPH: What is the matter, Doctor.

DOCTOR: I've repaired the linkages, but the damage is not as superficial as I first thought. The central omnitronic processor has melted.

JOSEPH: And that is bad, is it?

DOCTOR: Very.

JOSEPH: I thought it might be.

DOCTOR: It's useless without the processor. The transmat would scramble our molecules and spray them willy-nilly all over the place.

JOSEPH: And you don't happen to be carrying a spare about you.

DOCTOR: No.

JOSEPH: Then it's down to me, I suppose.

DOCTOR: Do you realise what you're saying?

JOSEPH: My brain has an omnitronic processor. I'm not stupid.

DOCTOR: But Joseph, you won't be able to function without that processor.

JOSEPH: Like I said, I'm not stupid.

DOCTOR: Joseph, you'd be committing suicide.

JOSEPH: Don't be daft. I am just a robot.

DOCTOR: Oh, there must be another way. I mean, what if I tried to rig up some kind of connection. You know, relay the transmat circuits through your brain.

JOSEPH: There is no time for that, Doctor. Ace can't hold off those skeletons for much longer.

DOCTOR: You're a very brave robot.

JOSEPH: It is in my programming, remember. The selfless sacrifice subroutine.
ACE: Doctor, they're coming!
JOSEPH: Get on with it, Doctor.
DOCTOR: I won't forget this, Joseph.
JOSEPH: Open the access hatch on my head. The panel inside should lift out to reveal the processor.
DOCTOR: I see it. Right, I'm in.
JOSEPH: That is my brain making that noise. It's funny, but I've never heard it before.
DOCTOR: When I disconnect the processor, you'll never hear it again.
JOSEPH: I will never hear anything again.
DOCTOR: I'm sorry, Joseph. Goodbye. It was a pleasure knowing you.
(Powers down. Ace runs over.)
ACE: That's it, we've got to get out of here.
DOCTOR: One moment. Nearly there.
ACE: What's up with Metal Mickey?
DOCTOR: He sacrificed himself so that we might live.
ACE: Sacrificed?
DOCTOR: Brain donation. There we are. Come on, Ace!

LOMAR: Our time has come at last, Emissary. The solar generator has provided us with a virtual star. Look at that light.
KRULL: I'd rather not.
SLYDE: It is beautiful.
KRULL: It is an abomination. Bernice, my darling, be a good girl and detonate that star, would you?
BENNY: As you wish, O master.
LOMAR: The reverse photon field is taking effect.
SLYDE: You can see it already. The surface of the star is visible, darkening as we speak.
LOMAR: A Black Light explosion, Slyde. We did it!
KRULL: Behold the coming of the Dark Flame.

(Whoosh!)
ACE: Oh, doesn't get any better, does it?
DOCTOR: It's disgusting, but it was only meant for refuse.
ACE: Oh, I'm filthy. Hey, what's happened to the light?
DOCTOR: Look out of the porthole.
ACE: What is it?
DOCTOR: An artificial sun.
ACE: But why is it so, so dark?
DOCTOR: Because we're too late. They've started the Black Light explosion. The star is caught in a reverse photon field. The Emissary is converting it into a gateway to a dark universe. When that process is complete, its evil will be carried to every corner of Time and Space.

KRULL: O, glorious night, fall on this cosmos like a shroud.
LOMAR: It's so cold.
SLYDE: Like the first chill breeze of autumn promising the winter to come.
KRULL: You feel it, don't you? You can sense the coming of Darkness.
LOMAR: But it feels so cold, master, deep inside me, as if my blood freezes in my veins.
KRULL: That isn't the cold you feel, Lomar. That is the burning heat of the Dark Flame.
SLYDE: Look, the star, as grey as dead ashes.
KRULL: A most lustrous death, wouldn't you agree, Bernice, my dear?
BENNY: Er, I don't know.
KRULL: Bernice.
BENNY: Look at my hand. The hand I used to, to start the process. Look at it.
KRULL: It is withered and ancient. The hand of a crone.
BENNY: Goddess, what's happening to me? What have you done to me? What have you made me do?
KRULL: (laughs) Oh, my dear, look outside. Look at the light.
BENNY: What? There is no light.
KRULL: Precisely.
(Door opens.)
DOCTOR: This has gone far enough!
BENNY: Doctor!
KRULL: Doctor?
DOCTOR: Surprised to see me?
KRULL: Somewhat.

DOCTOR: Surprise is my middle name.

BENNY: Actually, it's my middle name.

DOCTOR: Bernice! All you all right?

BENNY: Doctor, look at my hand.

DOCTOR: Hmm. A nasty case of temporal acceleration. You didn't happen to leave it near the Black Light converter when it was switched on, did you?

BENNY: I couldn't help it.

DOCTOR: Of course not. Yes, you were being controlled by the Emissary.

BENNY: But what have I done?

DOCTOR: You've kick-started the end of the universe, I think.

BENNY: Oh. Er, sorry.

KRULL: The Dark Flame is burning in that black star, preparing to consume this universe star by star, galaxy by galaxy.

BENNY: But that will take ages. Even if the rate of disjunction is exponential, this universe is a pretty big place, you know.

DOCTOR: No. The Black Light explosion occurs within the Space-Time Continuum, Bernice. Its effects will be felt throughout all Time and Space.

BENNY: I'm sorry, I simply can't comprehend that.

DOCTOR: Don't be sorry.

KRULL: Well, Doctor, you're too late to stop me. So what now? Are you ready to join me on the winning side?

DOCTOR: It's not over yet. That star has yet to reach full conversion to Black Light. Until then, your precious Dark Flame is trapped inside it.

KRULL: Not trapped, just waiting impatiently, knocking on the door to creation and wanting an answer.

DOCTOR: Then it's time we locked the door. This universe is closed for business today.

(Beeps, door opens.)

ACE: Freeze! Hands in the air, all of you.

BENNY: Ace! Thank the Goddess. Sorry, by the way, about before, the kicking and all that.

ACE: Forget it. I owe the bruises to laughing boy there.

DOCTOR: How nice of you to join us, Ace. And I'm glad to see you've found a nice big gun.

BENNY: You're glad?

DOCTOR: Figure of speech.

SLYDE: Come here, you (thud)

ACE: Goodnight, Slyde. Hope the bedbugs bite you all over. Right, you lot, this is a full-range neutron blaster. One shot will fry a Dalek in its casing. Who wants to argue?

KRULL: Put your weapon away.

ACE: Get over yourself. This'll made dogfood out of you.

KRULL: I think not.

(Click, click.)

ACE: What? What's wrong with it?

DOCTOR: It's no good, Ace.

ACE: I don't understand.

KRULL: Do you think a simple tool like that weapon lies beyond the influence of my mind, girl? It won't work for you because I will not let it.

DOCTOR: Never mind, Ace. It was worth a try. But guns are never really any use in the end.

ACE: Oh, damn it!

DOCTOR: Time for plan B, then.

BENNY: Great. Plan B. I love plan B. What is plan B?

DOCTOR: Overturn the reverse photon field surrounding that star.

KRULL: Be my guest, Doctor. Halt the process. Deactivate the Black Light converter, if you can.

BENNY: Doctor?

DOCTOR: I can't move.

KRULL: Oh, sorry. Did I forget to mention that I can now control your every thought?

DOCTOR: Can't move!

KRULL: As the Dark Flame draws closer, so my power increases. You thought your Time Lord mind was too strong for me, Doctor, but you're mistaken. Such arrogance. To me you have the mind of a child, a primate, an insect.

DOCTOR: Let go!

KRULL: Doctor, the more you resist me, the more I will tighten my grip. Eventually I will have to grasp your little mind so tightly that I will crush it like a soft fruit.

(The Doctor screams.)

BENNY: Stop it! Stop it! You're killing him!

KRULL: Am I supposed to be worried?

(The Doctor screams.)

KRULL: On your knees, Time Lord. That's better. Now you can swear your allegiance to the Dark Flame, Doctor. Avow your devotion to the evil force growing in that dark stargate.

DOCTOR: No, no.

KRULL: Do it, Doctor. Give yourself over to the Dark Flame. Obey the will of Vilus Krull.

DOCTOR: Never.

KRULL: I command you!

DOCTOR: (in pain) I swear

KRULL: I can't hear you. Speak up.

DOCTOR: No, no!

ACE: Oh stop it, for goodness' sake!

KRULL: For goodness' sake? (laughs)

ACE: You're killing him!

KRULL: No, he'll give in to me before he dies. I'll make him.

ACE: You won't. He's the Doctor.

KRULL: Grovel, Doctor. Beg like a dog.

DOCTOR: Please, please stop.

BENNY: Ace, do something!

ACE: Right.

BENNY: Wait. Wait, the Doctor's umbrella.

ACE: I think I'm getting the hang of this now. (thud) How's that?

BENNY: He's out cold.

ACE: Bet you can't make him beg now. Benny, we're out of here.

(Door opens.)

LOMAR: Stop!

KRULL: Let them go. They don't matter.

(Door closes.)

KRULL: Before long they will come crawling back to me, craving mercy. The Dark Flame burns.

ACE: Come on, run!

BENNY: I'm running, I'm running! What about the Doctor? We can't just leave him in there.

ACE: He's safe so long as he's unconscious.

BENNY: You're sure of that, are you?

ACE: That's what he told me. Plan B.

BENNY: I thought plan B was reverse the photon overturn or something.

ACE: No, that's plan C. Plan B comes first. Knock the Doctor out so the Emissary can't get at him.

BENNY: And the Doctor said it was safe to do that?

ACE: Yeah.

BENNY: And all that business with the neutron blaster?

ACE: Diversion.

BENNY: Oh, well, all right. But, but did you have to leave it so long before we knocked him out?

ACE: Oh yeah. Had to be convincing, didn't it?

BENNY: Oh. Oh, it was.

ACE: And while everyone was looking at the Doctor, it gave me a chance to have a look at the Black Light converter.

BENNY: Because?

ACE: Because, when the moment comes, there won't be much time.

BENNY: The moment?

KRULL: We approach the apotheosis. The Dark Flame comes.

LOMAR: Glory be to the Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: A pox on the Dark Flame.

KRULL: Doctor.

DOCTOR: Sorry about that. I must have drifted off. Now, where were we?

KRULL: Just about to witness the destruction of your universe, I think.

DOCTOR: Oh yes, that. How's it going?

KRULL: See for yourself, Time Lord. The star is burning with blackness, full of the coruscating evil that I serve. The very air around us grows cold.

DOCTOR: Yes, it is a bit chilly in here. Fascinating, of course, that your Dark Flame could actually cause a temperature drop.

KRULL: That is the unnatural beauty of the Flame, Doctor. Can you feel it seeping through Time and Space, spreading out from the dark star like a shadow across creation?

DOCTOR: Yes, I can. I can feel the way in which the Dark Flame will overturn everything in its path, the way

everything natural and good and right for this universe will be changed. It is a force that is totally alien to this dimension. It will replace creation with destruction, life with death. World after world, entire civilisations and histories will be left in ashes. Love will be turned into hate, peace into war. Parents will turn against child.

KRULL: The Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: And what then? What next for the Emissary of the Dark Flame, the man who was once called Vilus Krull?

KRULL: There will be other universes to conquer and destroy.

DOCTOR: Perhaps. Who knows? The question was rhetorical anyway, because the Dark Flame stops here.

KRULL: Don't be foolish.

DOCTOR: Oh, I'm no fool. To get to this universe, my universe, the Dark Flame will have to go through me first.

KRULL: Ridiculous. You would be consumed within a moment.

DOCTOR: Are you sure? I thought you said that the Dark Flame burnt in all of us, smouldering somewhere inside, ready to flare up and turn us all into evil. Let's put that to the test, shall we?

KRULL: You don't know what you're asking, Time Lord.

DOCTOR: Oh, come on. You're the Dark Flame's Emissary in this universe, Vilus. It's just you and me now. Lomar and Slyde, I mean, they're nothing without you thinking their thoughts for them. They are empty and useless, just like the Dark Flame.

KRULL: You don't understand the power of the Dark Flame.

DOCTOR: Oh, I understand that it is a strange force from the end of the universe with no thought or direction or purpose or life of its own.. At least, not without you. Not without Vilus Krull, the twisted little man who happened to make contact with it all those thousands of years ago. Oh, I don't know what happened. I doubt even you do. But you used its power, took a kind of immortality from it, an inept and corrupted immortality, living from corpse to corpse to corpse like some kind of parasite.

KRULL: Stop it.

DOCTOR: What are you afraid of? Have you ever thought what might happen if your Dark Flame was controlled by something else, or someone else? Someone who wasn't such a nasty little man as Vilus Krull.

KRULL: Someone like you?

DOCTOR: As I said, it's just you and me here now.

KRULL: I controlled your mind before, Doctor. I can destroy it with a thought.

DOCTOR: The Dark Flame could, but not you.

KRULL: You push me too far.

DOCTOR: Well, let's see. Put your hand on your old skull, Vilus. I'll put my hand on it too. That way we can both connect to the parachronic element that controls the Black Light converter and taps directly into the Dark Flame. Let's see if your control and power over an alien force from the distant future is as absolute as you think it is.

KRULL: Very well.

BENNY: Oh no, not this place again. Didn't I mention that I never wanted to see that wretched waste transmat again?

ACE: Stop moaning. This is our only chance.

BENNY: The waste disposal? You know, this has a certain circular poetry to it. Everything keeps coming back to this place. What are we going to do, flush ourselves back down to Marran Alpha?

ACE: The Doctor's made some more adjustments.

BENNY: You know that doesn't exactly fill me with confidence, Ace.

ACE: Come on. I'll go first.

BENNY: Go where?

ACE: You follow.

(Whoosh!)

KRULL: Prepare to die, Doctor. The Dark Flame will snuff out your mind like a candle.

DOCTOR: Oh, I can feel it. Can you?

KRULL: I am the Dark Flame. I am the Dark Flame!

DOCTOR: No. You just think you are. The Dark Flame is nothing, just a force of nature, an aberration in Space and Time from the point of no return for this universe.

KRULL: You're lying. Come to me, Dark Flame. Become me! Become me!

DOCTOR: The last breath of life from the future, Vilus, that's all the Dark Flame is, and I can feel it now. I can feel the cold, cold heat. We're folding Time back on itself from the end of everything. Time turning, twisting. I can feel what will happen yesterday and what happened tomorrow.

(Whoosh!)

ACE: Doctor!

BENNY: Bloody hell, what's going on?

ACE: He's keeping the Emissary busy. Plan B.

BENNY: I thought plan B was
(The Doctor screams.)
BENNY: Oh, never mind. Go straight to plan C, will you?
ACE: This control here. Help me pull the lever down.
KRULL: No, stop them! Destroy them all!
BENNY: I can't move it. It's like Time's folding back on itself.
ACE: Quickly! Go on!
BENNY: Oh, hell's teeth. Look at Remnex.
ACE: He's, he's gone.
BENNY: The Doctor!
ACE: He's falling. Grab him.
(Thud.)
BENNY: Whoops. Too late. Oh, hey, look at my hand. It's back to normal.
DOCTOR: (groans) What's happened?
BENNY: You're supposed to tell us that.
DOCTOR: Am I? Oh.
ACE: Doctor, what happened? Have we won?
DOCTOR: I don't know. Did you overturn the reverse photon field?
ACE: We pulled the lever you said needed pulling.
DOCTOR: Then we've won. I think.
BENNY: That star, it's bright again.
DOCTOR: The sun is shining! Excellent!
BENNY: Hold it. Look at Lomar. She's coming round too.
LOMAR: Oh. Oh. Er, Bernice? What's going on?
DOCTOR: You've been in the thrall of Vilus Krull, but you're free of him now.
LOMAR: What? How?
DOCTOR: He's had to go.
LOMAR: I, I don't understand. Who had to go where and who are you?
DOCTOR: I'm the Doctor. How do you do, Professor Lomar.
LOMAR: Oh, Benny's friend. But
ACE: Never mind that. Doctor, where's Rem, I mean, Krull now?
BENNY: Yeah, what did happen to him?
DOCTOR: Best not to ask.
ACE: But he just sort of disintegrated.
BENNY: It was horrible, verging on the disgusting.
DOCTOR: It's in the nature of these things, I'm afraid.
BENNY: What did you do?
DOCTOR: Come with me.

(Door creaks.)
BENNY: This is Remnex's room.
ACE: Blimey, it's him.
BENNY: Remnex? But I
DOCTOR: Things have changed
BENNY: But he's a, well, he's still dead.
ACE: So what's he doing there, though, all tucked up in bed?
DOCTOR: Remnex died peacefully in his sleep last night.
ACE: No, he didn't. He was murdered, stabbed through the eye. We all saw it.
BENNY: But there's no wound anymore. Doctor, this isn't what happened.
DOCTOR: It is now. For a few moments back there, my mind was fused with the Dark Flame. I had unprecedented access to Time.
BENNY: You fiddled around with what happened, didn't you? Rejuvenated my hand and everything.
DOCTOR: Not really, Benny. A nip here, a tuck there, perhaps. A stitch in Time. But I couldn't prevent Remnex dying, or for that matter, the sad death of your friend Victor Farrison. No one should have that power, not like that. But Remnex deserved a better death.
BENNY: You used the skull, didn't you. Vilus Krull's skull.
DOCTOR: It was a perfect control element, yes. But not anymore. It's been swallowed by the Space-Time Continuum along with, well, you know.
ACE: Hang about. If Remnex wasn't murdered, he couldn't have sent that message to us in the Vortex, could he?
DOCTOR: Shh, you'll spoil it all.
ACE: You've created a paradox.
DOCTOR: I certainly have not. I mean, we were coming here anyway, remember, to collect Bernice?

ACE: You cunning old

BENNY: Actually, it's kind of sad seeing Remnex like this. Sad but better.

ACE: But if Remnex wasn't actually murdered

DOCTOR: Then Slyde is innocent, yes. Although I suspect you might still find him unpleasant company, and not really the kind of person who should be mucking about with Black Light explosions. When he wakes up, I'll ask Lomar to find a way of diverting his interests. Stamp collecting, perhaps.

ACE: Refuse collecting?

DOCTOR: (laughs) How could I refuse? Now, this leaves me with only two things left to do.

BENNY: Which are?

DOCTOR: Firstly, Bernice, collect your things if you're ready to leave.

BENNY: Oh, I'm quite ready to go, Doctor.

DOCTOR: Good, good. Now I'm off to see Professor Lomar. Ace, you help Benny get her things together. The Tardis is that way, I think.

ACE: Er, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Yes?

ACE: And secondly?

DOCTOR: Oh, right. Oh yes, silly me. Yes, I must find a way of fixing this.

ACE: What is it?

DOCTOR: Joseph's omnitrone processor. He sacrificed it so that you and I could escape from Marran Alpha, but I'm sure I can find a way of reactivating it.

BENNY: Joseph was, well, he was Joseph, but er he was sort of Victor as well, wasn't he?

DOCTOR: I think I know someone who could salvage his memory and personality.

BENNY: Doctor

DOCTOR: You never know, Benny, you might need Joseph's help again one day.

BENNY: Yeah, right.

DOCTOR: Go on, off you go.

(Ace and Benny leave.)

DOCTOR : Oh, I love this job.

D7 Ace Benny; Slyde (scientist/cultist) hoarse slimy: Joseph the Porter (android of Victor, reverberating voice); Vilus Krull (Cult leader); Lomar (f prof/cultist); Sorus Alpha; Orbos; Marran Alpha